

# **FACTIONAL POLITICS**

by  
Nicole Golonka Reppert

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## **ABSTRACT**

Political scholars have extensively studied American political parties; however, the majority of this research is out dated. This paper provides a historical background of American parties focusing on the factional makeup within the parties. It analyses the rise and decline of the Tea Party within the Republican Party, and the Moderate, Blue Dogs, within the Democratic Party. This work finds that parties are coalitions of different factional groupings, and throughout the party's history, different factional groups serve as the predominant voice within their party.

This thesis was read by my advisor, Professor Dorothea Wolfson and Professor Robert Guttman.

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## INTRODUCTION

Studies on political parties tend to focus on all aspects from their formation, to their organization, to the different roles they play as well as debate theories of party decline and resurgence.<sup>1</sup> Scholars have focused their studies on parties in congress, discussing the organization role of parties, the party in control, as well as party leaders and the tools for party discipline.<sup>2</sup> What can be concluded from previous research is parties are coalitions of people with different ideals and different goals from the opposition. However, parties face internal battles as well. These intra-party battles are between the party's different factional groupings.

Upon drafting the United States Constitution, James Madison, one of the founding fathers of the United States, discussed the danger of "factions," or groups of citizens, in the republic. In the *Federalist Paper*, No. 10, Madison addressed the question of how to guard against "factions," with interests contrary to interests of the whole community.

Madison stated:

By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adversed to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community...<sup>3</sup>

Factions were viewed as being inherently bad, but Madison believed that a strong

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<sup>1</sup> To learn more on parties see: John H. Aldrich, *Why Parties the Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> To learn more on congressional parties see: Steven S. Smith, *Party Influence in Congress* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007). William R. Lowry and Charles R. Shipan, "Party Differentiation in Congress," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 27, no. 1 (February 2002): 33-60, accessed April 17, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3598518>.

<sup>3</sup> James Madison, "Federalist Paper No. 10."

extended republic would be the best guard against these factions. Madison's contribution to the new Constitution ensured that private interest could not seize control of the government. This example demonstrates that even the founders were aware of the potential role that factions could wield in politics.

Until relatively recently, scholars had not focused much attention on factions. While our founding fathers were aware of factions, scholars began focusing on factions - within political parties- in the late 1940's. Political scientists have had a hard time identifying and measuring factions. Within Congressional politics, factions can sometime represent as caucuses, however, they do not always work together as a bloc because caucus membership is not restricted or mandatory.

Since President Obama has come to office both parties have faced intra-party conflict, while typically seen in candidate selection and primaries, they are also seen in party goals- such as passing legislation. The goal of this thesis is to identify the current factions within the Republican and Democratic Parties and investigate the role these factions play within their corresponding parties.

This paper attempts to offer a new look at party politics in Congress. This study is extremely important for a variety of reasons. First, the study of party coalitions and their factions explains how parties react to their voters. Second, it offers the idea that individual party factions can dominate the political arena and that these factions can easily exit a party as easily as they entered. Additionally, the notion of party factions could become a new area to study when comparing the two parties, from how parties react to changes within the other party. Finally, this study could provide insight to the ongoing discussion of party polarization in America.

### *School of Thought*

Political scientists have extensively studied American political parties. Scholars have offered countless theories addressing the development of parties, to their role, to theories on the decline of party, followed by their resurgence. Academic scholar, John H. Aldrich, who has comprehensively studied American parties, believes there are three approaches scholar must understand when studying American political parties.<sup>4</sup>

Aldrich's first approach is parties are diverse coalitions, filled with diverse partners; that work to appeal to the majority of the people. Aldrich explains that this has been evident since the New Deal, with the Democratic Party creating the Democratic majority in the 1930s, consisting of the then- solid South, immigrants, African Americans, religious groups, unions, along with many others. In the Republican Party, it is evident with both Wall Street and Main Street fiscal conservatives, social conservatives, and anti-government groups. While each group is allied with their particular parties for certain reasons, there is great diversity within each party.

The second approach is around the theory of responsible parties, focusing on the decline and resurgence of American parties. Aldrich outlines a number of the concerns raised with these theories today, but concludes that "today both parties can seriously imagine competing effectively-and possibly winning-in every region of the nation."<sup>5</sup> The third approach focuses on the importance of this competition for office. Theories argue that the goal of the candidate is to win the election, and the party is the means to get there. Aldrich's research holds true with today's conventional wisdom. Parties are

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<sup>4</sup> Aldrich, 7-14.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 10.

organizations that seek influence over government. Parties shape our elections, from organizing the public, to selecting our candidates. As coalitions, parties are filled with diverse partners that seek to appeal to the majority of the people.

While Aldrich's information is insightful to the overall study of political parties, this paper seeks to focus on the current state of the Republican and Democratic parties. As Aldrich's, overall point demonstrates the academic knowledge of parties is comprehensive, this paper follows the school of thought, that parties are coalitions, focusing on parties in Congress, and investigates the external and internal factors that affect party politics in America.

Parties play a significant role within the role of Congress. Parties serve as an aid in election. They organize the members, and elect leaders. Within Congress, the party that holds the majority holds the ultimate position of authority. Parties make positions and serve to unify their diverse members.

Up until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the parties in Congress were ideologically diverse. That is, both parties had a significant number of members who shared similar ideological beliefs with the other party. Within the Republican Party, there were liberals, known as "Rockefeller Republicans," and within the Democratic Party, there were conservatives known as "Boil Weevils." Scholars classify these members as party misfits due to their willingness to vote across party lines. Today the "four party politics" that once existed has transformed into two ideological cohesive parties.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Richard Fleisher and John R. Bond, "The Shrinking Middle in the US Congress," *British Journal of Political Science* 34, no. 3 (July 2004): 429-457, accessed August 27, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4092328>.



However, today's parties are no longer divided based just on ideology, as outside forces have offered party factions a greater say in the political arena. With the rise of candidate centered campaigns, outside party resources, and the ability for individual groups to mobilize party leaders are left with a more diverse, out-spoken caucus.

Factional groups vary in their size, organization, and membership; however, they can yield a significant impact in the legislative arena. This thesis ties together three different schools of thought within the research on American Political Parties- parties as coalitions, factions, and parties in Congress. Following the notion that parties are diverse coalitions, it uses the idea that factions can wield power in Congress and no longer needs just the two parties.

Chapter 1 seeks to identify and explain the Tea Party Movement and its relationship to the Republican Party. This chapter focuses on the 2010 Congressional elections and the Tea Party Caucus within Congress. This chapter seeks to prove two things. First, it seeks to reveal the true nature of this movement, in order to understand its relationship to the Republican Party. The second is an investigation of the notion that the Tea Party Movement has caused some type of internal dispute within the Republican Party.

While there is no new movement like the Tea Party Movement in the Democratic Party, the Democrats have lost their moderate and conservative wings within their party. Chapter 2 goes onto look at the current state of the Democratic Party and answer the question, where have the moderate Democrats gone? Although, scholars know that the disappearance of moderates in Congress is not a new phenomenon, this chapter seeks to answer this question by only focusing on the modern Democratic Party. Therefore,

Chapter 2 begins with an overview of the academic literature on party moderates and discusses why these moderate members have all but practically disappeared in Congress. It then accounts for the loss of party moderates in the current Democratic Party and investigates the role moderates play within the Democratic caucus.

The final chapter seeks to elaborate on the role party factions play in Congress and investigate on how this role has changed throughout time. More specifically, this chapter will answer the questions, what causes factions? What role do factions play? What are the fates of factions? In order to do this, Chapter 3 offers an extensive background on party factions, and compares the Tea Party faction to the Democrat's moderate faction, by analyzing the rise and decline of these two factions in Congress since President Obama.

## CHAPTER 1

### *The Tea Party and the Current State of the Republican Party in Congress*

#### **I. Introduction**

The Tea Party Movement surged into American public life after President Obama's 2009 inauguration and more particularly after the passage of the Affordable Health Care Act in 2010. Since the time the movement first emerged in American politics, it has been highly scrutinized by the public. Academic scholars have studied the movement extensively and due to a considerably large amount of polling; these scholars have been able to understand who is behind this movement. The polling indicates Tea Party members are overwhelmingly Republican, and fiscally conservative.<sup>7</sup>

In July of 2010, Representative Michelle Bachmann introduced the Tea Party Caucus, where Republican members quickly jumped onto the Tea Party bandwagon. In the summer of 2010, fifty-five House Republicans identified themselves as Tea Party Caucus members.<sup>8</sup> The caucus emerged shortly after a CNN poll indicated that an overwhelming amount of Republicans (73 percent) would be more likely to support a candidate for Congress who was part of the Tea Party Movement.<sup>9</sup> Later that year, during

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<sup>7</sup> Vanessa Williamson, Theda Skocpol, and John Coggin, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Bryan T. Gervais and Irwin L. Morris, "Reading the Tea Leaves: Understanding Tea Party Caucus Membership in the US House of Representatives," *PS* 35, no. 4 (April 2012): 245-250, accessed March 1, 2013, [http://bryangervais.weeblycom/uploads/8/6/9/2/8692436/gervais\\_morris\\_tealeaves\\_2012.pdf](http://bryangervais.weeblycom/uploads/8/6/9/2/8692436/gervais_morris_tealeaves_2012.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> *CNN/Opinion Research Corporation Poll*, May 25, 2010. Retrieved from iPoll Database, The Roper Center of Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut, accessed March 20, 2013. <http://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnn/2010/images/05/25/re18cvt7.pdf>

the 2010 elections, the Republicans gained eighty-four new conservative members in the House of Representatives, which scholars heavily credited to the Tea Party Movement.

However, roughly, three years later, pundits claim that the movement has caused some type of internal clash within the Republican Party. This paper seeks to do two things. First, it seeks to reveal the true nature of this movement, in order to understand its relationship to the Republican Party. The second is an investigation of the notion that the Tea Party Movement has caused some type of internal dispute within the Republican Party. I begin my research by providing a brief overview of the different schools of thought within the Republican Party. I then provide some basic literature on populism in America, following with an overview of the Tea Party Movement as a populist movement. This paper ends by investigating the Tea Party's relationship with the Republican Party. I conclude that although the Tea Party regularly receives blame for the clash inside the Republican Establishment, the movement itself is not to blame for in-house arguments within the Republican party, if anything, it has merely served as bold and appealing disguise over a conservative party that has slowly abandoned the principles of small government and fiscal responsibility.

## **II. The Republican Party's Big Tent**

Throughout history, the Republican Party has been the party of unity. Born out of the anti-slavery movement, the party has built its base in northern states by advocating for business and commercial interest. Today we refer to the original Republican Party as the Grand Old Party, which once had liberal and moderate wings that influenced the

party's agenda. However, since conservatism rose within the political arena in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Republican Party has faced significant changes.

The 1980 election of President Ronald Reagan solidified the Republican Party as the party of conservatives. According to Dr. George H. Nash, Reagan's 'Big Tent' started with three different school of thought, libertarians, traditionalists, and Cold War anti-communists. In theory, the libertarian wing of the party feared big government and stressed individual liberty and personal freedoms, while the traditionalists were against the libertarian wings individualism and stressed traditional values and order, however, like the anti-communist wing, all embodied a distaste of those who were part of the left.<sup>10</sup> As Nash observed, the shared enemy was liberalism.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, the 1948 Republican Party Platform embraced all three schools of thoughts:

To establish and maintain peace, to build a country in which every citizen can earn a good living with the promise of real progress for himself and his family, and to uphold as a beacon light for mankind everywhere, the inspiring American tradition of liberty, opportunity and justice for all—that is the Republican platform.<sup>12</sup>

As Nash continues to describe, it was not long after these wings emerged, that two new impulses appeared in the political scene, the neoconservatives and the New Right. The neoconservatives represented disillusioned Democrats that were beginning to turn

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<sup>10</sup> Brian R. Farmer, *American Conservatism: History, Theory and Practice* (Angerton Gardens, Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005), 71-82.

<sup>11</sup> George H. Nash, "Completing the Revolution: Challenges for Conservatism after Reagan," *Policy Review* 36 (Spring 1986): 35-39.

<sup>12</sup> Republican Party Platforms: "Republican Party Platform of 1948," June 21, 1948. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project, accessed March 13, 2013, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25836>.

more conservative; these former leftists fled the party following the presidency of Jimmy Carter. While the New Right represented conservative fundamentalists and evangelicals, whose primary concerns were fostered around their belief that contemporary society was in a state of moral decline. The neoconservatives and the New Right shared concerns about the declining influence of religion in American society; however, the neoconservative wing disliked the religious right's anti-intellectualism. Therefore, according to Nash, Reagan's 'Big Tent' represented five distinct impulses, libertarians, traditionalists, Cold War anti-communists, neoconservatives, and the New Right.<sup>13</sup>

The key to Reagan's success was his ability to unite members from these different conservative wings, with his strategic ability to use populism. Reagan came to office as a political outsider, with two main pillars, restoring the economy and ending communism. Following an era marked with economic downturns, political frustrations, and an increasing distrust of government, aspiring presidential candidate Ronald Reagan campaigned "to renew the American spirit and sense of purpose"<sup>14</sup> by promising to cut social programs and taxes, increase defense spending, and roll back the past fifty years of liberalism. Reagan explained in his first inaugural address that he believed the economic ills in society were a result of the government overspending.

In this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem. From time to time, we've been tempted to believe that society has become too complex to be managed by self-rule, that government by an elite group is superior to government for, by, and of

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<sup>13</sup> Nash, "Completing the Revolution: Challenges for Conservatism after Reagan," 35-39.

<sup>14</sup> Ronald Reagan, "Acceptance Speech at the 1980 Republican Convention" (speech, Detroit, MI, July 17, 1980), National Center, accessed March 13, 2013, <http://www.nationalcenter.org/ReaganConvention1980.html>.

the people. Well, if no one among us is capable of governing himself, then who among us has the capacity to govern someone else? <sup>15</sup>

Essentially, Reagan was proposing to bring the government back to *the people*. He opposed the idea of big government and spending, which appealed to the libertarians, while drawing in traditionalists, anti-communists, and neoconservatives by taking a strong stance on communism.

Conservatives finally had a home in the White House. Yet, by the end of Reagan's presidency, no conservative wing was fully content. According to Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank, Reagan failed the libertarian wing on two fronts. First, Reagan promised to decrease federal spending, however, by 1988, the year Reagan left office, the federal deficit increased the largest amount, within in an eight-year period, in U.S. history. The second disappointment according to Cato was Reagan's failure to roll back big government. Reagan promised to abolish President Carter's Education and Energy Departments; however, he did the exact opposite, by appointing secretaries that only wanted to preserve these agencies.<sup>16</sup> However, he did implement significant tax reforms that appeased this conservative wing.

Furthermore, throughout Reagan's presidency he served as a spokesperson advocating for traditional family values, however, by the end of his presidency, he failed to enact any substantial legislation that appeased the social conservative wing of the

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<sup>15</sup> Ronald Reagan, "Inaugural Address," (speech, Washington, DC, January 20, 1981), University of Texas, accessed March 13, 2013, <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1981/12081a.htm>.

<sup>16</sup> Gene Healy, "Ronald Reagan was no Libertarian," *Cato Institute* (February 8, 2011), accessed March 27, 2013, <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/ronald-reagan-was-no-libertarian>.

party.<sup>17</sup> Yet, he did appoint William Rehnquist to chief justice and added Anthony Scalia on to the Supreme Court. However, all the conservatives were somewhat pleased with Reagan's presidency, because he stopped Soviet Communism.<sup>18</sup>

### **III. Disillusion for Republicans**

Following Reagan's presidency, the Republican Party elected George H. W. Bush in the 1988 election, on a promise of no new taxes.<sup>19</sup> However, Bush failed to live up to this promise, which cost him the reelection, and with no foreign enemy to unite these conservative wings, Reagan's "Big Tent" began to split.

The dawn of the twenty first century brought conservatives new hope, by forming a unified dislike of President William Clinton. After Clinton, the conservative factions elect George W. Bush. While Bush ran as a 'compassionate conservative,' his time in office was marked with terrorism and war. The terrorist attacks on September 11th, forced the 'compassionate conservative' to take tough stances on national security and defense. However, the American people were particularly pleased with the way President George W. Bush handled these attacks. At the time, a Gallup poll indicated that the president's popularity peaked to 90 percent, which was the highest it had ever stood, where pundits credit Bush's favorability for the Republican Party picking up seats in the

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<sup>17</sup> James Harold Farney, *Social Conservatives and Party Politics in Canada and the United States* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 56.

<sup>18</sup> Ryan Safer, *The Elephant in the Room* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Son, 2006), 51.

<sup>19</sup> George H. W. Bush, "Acceptance Speech at the 1988 Republican National Convention," (speech, New Orleans, August 18, 1988), accessed March 13, 2013, *American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25955>.



House and Senate in the 2002 election, giving the Republican Party firm control of both chambers.<sup>20</sup> This was the first time since 1934 that a president's party picked up seats during a midterm election in both chambers.<sup>21</sup> However, Bush's high popularity did not last long.

At the end of his first term and being busy seeking reelection, polls indicated the American people were no longer supporting the Republicans as they did before.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, roughly, ten years after the Republican revolution, the fault lines within the Republican Party were still expanding. As one scholar described:

These challenges have given rise to growing divisions within the Republican ranks about who truly speaks for the party: the many factions of committed conservatives, the dwindling group of moderates, or the pragmatic leaders who want to honor conservative goals while doing what it takes to keep the Republicans in power. The most uncomfortable challenge will be figuring out how to deal with the growing feeling in its ranks that the party has already compromised the goals it set out for itself 10 years ago.<sup>23</sup>

While Bush campaigned for his second term his advisors thought it would be best to advocate the goals of basic conservative and moderate factions, "fighting terrorism with a peace through strength approach, cutting taxes, reducing lawsuits and regulation,

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<sup>20</sup> *Gallup Polls*, "George W. Bush Approval by Party Affiliation," accessed February 1, 2013, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/116500/presidential-approval-rations-george-bush.aspx>.

<sup>21</sup> David Nather, *"Behind the Unity, a Question: Who Speaks for the GOP?"* CQ Weekly (September 4, 2004): 2026-36, accessed February 1, 2013, <http://library.cqpress.com/cqweekly/weeklyreport108-000001314750>.

<sup>22</sup> Jeffery Jones, "Republican, Democratic Party Images Equally Negative," *Gallup Polls*, (September 30, 2011), accessed February 1, 2013, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/149795/Republican-Democratic-Party-Images-Equally-Negative.aspx>.

<sup>23</sup> Nather, *"Behind the Unity, a Question: Who Speaks for the GOP?"*

and the ownership society initiatives,” which ultimately worked and scored him another four years in the White House.<sup>24</sup> However, two years into his second term, the Republican Party lost both the House and Senate as Bush’s approval rating was rapidly spiraling to hit an all time low. By 2008, with Bush’s popularity at its lowest and the housing market on the brink of disaster, the Democrats advanced further, and gained control of the White House, after electing Illinois Senator Barack Obama.<sup>25</sup>

The election left the Republican Party in shambles. At this time, most rank-and-file Republicans wanted to see the Republican Party move in a more conservative direction, while a small percent wanted it to remain about the same.<sup>26</sup> News commentators marked 2008 as the end of conservatism in America.<sup>27</sup> However, the emergence of the Tea Party Movement, with a strong populist message of antigovernment, provided hope for the Republican Party and a strong possibility for conservatism to reemerge in America.

#### IV. Populism

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> CQ Press, “More Voters, Changing Voter Patterns,” *Guide to Congress* 7th ed., vol. 2, (2013) Washington, DC: CQ Press. accessed March 27, 2013, Retrieved from <http://library.cqpress.com/elections/g2c7e2-1397-79147-2490763>.

<sup>26</sup> Lydia Saad, “GOP Takes Another Image Hit Post-Election,” Gallup Polls, (November 20, 2008) , accessed February 1, 2013, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/112015/GOP-Takes-Another-Image-Hit-PostElection.aspx>.

<sup>27</sup> Todd Thurman, “The End of Conservatism?” *Foundry.com*, April 2, 2009, under “First Principles,” <http://blog.heritage.org/2009/04/02/the-end-of-conservatism> (accessed April 26, 2013). Also, George Packer, “The Fall of Conservatism: Have the Republicans run out of ideas?” *The New Yorker*, May 26, 2008, under “The Political Scene,” accessed April 26, 2013, [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/05/26/080526fa\\_fact\\_packer](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/05/26/080526fa_fact_packer).

As noted in the last section, Reagan was able to hold the disparate coalition together through populism; and populism is largely fueling the Tea Party movement. Thus, a closer examination of the roots of populism is warranted.

### *Defining Populism*

Scholars have had a difficult time accepting a uniformed definition for populism. Some scholars have strong interpretations of populism, such as describing it as a form of agrarian radicalism, while some scholars interpret populism as a grassroots movement, which emphasizes that participation in politics is the most crucial feature of populism.

As Michael Kazin explained in his book, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*, there are two widely held definitions for populism. According to Kazin, the first originated as a mass movement in the late 1880s among disgruntled farmers, which gave populism its name. The other definition is loose-fitting and popular branding method of a movement. However, to Kazin, both terms define populism best. He defined populism as a “persistent yet mutable style of political rhetoric with roots deep in the nineteenth century.”<sup>28</sup> However not all academic scholars have agreed on this definition and they continue to work on finding a better-suited definition for populism. For example Daniele Albertazzi and Duncan McDonnell define populism as “an ideology, which pits a virtuous and homogenous people against a set of elites and dangerous ‘others’ who are together depicted as depriving (or attempting to deprive) the sovereign people of their

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<sup>28</sup> Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 5.

rights, values, prosperity, identity and voice.”<sup>29</sup> Ultimately, these different definitions simply say, “populism calls for the return of power to ordinary people.”<sup>30</sup>

### *Populist Themes*

As a result of the failure to agree on a uniform definition for populism, scholars begun analyzing populist movements by identifying common traits these movements share. Professor Paul A. Taggart, from Sussex European Institute, identifies six reoccurring themes in populist movements.<sup>31</sup> According to Taggart, the first core theme that populist movements share is hostility to representative politics. This means populism can only occur in conditions where it can become a political force. As Margaret Canovan described in her book *Populism*, populism forms as a force that attempts to make the government do for them what they could not do for themselves.<sup>32</sup>

The second common characteristic of populism described by Taggart is the ability to identity to a heartland. He claims that the heartland represents a community, from their values to their beliefs. Taggart identifies common populist rhetoric, such as, *the people* verse *the elite*, and the key aspect to *the people* is their size, which implies that *the people* are the majority, and *the people* are already formed and aware. Within modern American

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<sup>29</sup> Daniele Albertazzi and Duncan McDonnell, "Introduction: The Sceptre and the Spectre," in *Twenty-First Century Populism*, ed. Daniele Albertazzi and Duncan McDonnell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 3.

<sup>30</sup> Patricia Nelson Limerick, "The Future of Populist Politics" (lecture, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO, February 5, 1999).

<sup>31</sup> Paul Taggart, "The Populist Turn in the Politics of the New Europe," (paper presented at the 8<sup>th</sup> Biannual International Conference of the European Union Studies Association, Nashville, TN, March 9, 2003).

<sup>32</sup> Margaret Canovan, *Populism* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981), 28.

populist discourse, references like the *Silent Majority* and *Middle America* are most common terms. Nevertheless, Taggart believes the fundamental element of the heartland, is establishing a link to the heartland, and that the established link must entail a disconnect or betrayal between *the people* and *the elite*, interpreting that *the people* are the ones governed and *the elite* are the political or economic advanced.

The third theme Taggart identifies is a lack of core values that have lead to the dissatisfaction of *the people*. The next common theme of populist movements is that they form from a reaction to a sense of extreme crisis; ultimately, this crisis can be over a wide array of issues, however, *the people* must always feel threatened.

Taggart's fifth element addresses the restriction populism faces once entered into the political arena; Taggart coins this by saying "populism has self-limiting dilemmas."

Taggart provides a good description of these dilemmas:

Political parties are key political institutions in the process of representative politics and are thus both an object of criticism and a way of mobilizing support for populists. This can create specific problems and also illustrates a fundamental institutional dilemma that faces populism. Its reaction against the institutions of representative politics is an important driving forces it, and yet, for that force to go anywhere, populism invariably has to use those institutions itself. Parties are inherent part of representative politics and so populism is predisposed to distrust them, but it is forced to use them.<sup>33</sup>

Taggart goes on to explain that populist movements have three fates, to become less populist, become driven with internal conflict, or self-collapse. The final theme is that

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<sup>33</sup> Paul Taggart, *Populism* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000), 92 -93.

populists are “highly chameleonic”<sup>34</sup> to their environment. This means the nature of the movement depends on the nation where it emerged.<sup>35</sup>

### *Types of Populism*

Due to the vague concept of populism, scholars have been left to believe that there is more than one type of populism. In order to clarify populism, Canovan studied different kinds of political movements, all labeled as populist movements and developed an in-depth analysis of seven types of populism, which are divided into two different categories:

#### **Agrarian Populism**

1. Farmer’s radicalism - The People’s Party in the United States
2. Peasant movements - The Green Rising of Eastern Europe
3. Intellectual agrarian socialism - The Narodniki of Russia<sup>36</sup>

#### **Political Populism**

1. Populist dictatorship- Juan Peron in Argentina
2. Populist democracy- calls for political participation
3. Reactionary populism- George Wallace in the United States
4. Politician’s populism – non-ideological appeals for “the people” coalition,

Widest range of constituents<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Paul Taggart, “The Populist Turn in the Politics of the New Europe,” 8.

<sup>35</sup> Taggart, *Populism*, 92 -99.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 137.

The difference between agrarian and political populism is that agrarian populism is a form of rural radicalism, which forms out of a particular socioeconomic group (farmers, peasants),<sup>38</sup> while political populism is less concerned with socioeconomic problems and more on political problems. However, both these movements share a similar trait, the tendency to idealize *the people* and regard *the elites* with hostility.

Most importantly, Canovan states that these categories are not mutually exclusive from the agrarian form of populism to the political form of populism, but scholars need to look at these exclusively to make a clear evaluation of populism. Canovan makes these two conclusions about populism.

In the first place, there are a great many interconnections among our seven theoretical categories. Many actual populist phenomena-perhaps most-belong in more than one category, and we have often been able to invoke the same cases to illustrate different theoretical points. Our second reflection must be, however, that there are severe limits to this overlapping. No movement has even been populist in all the senses identified, and indeed- given the contradictions between some of our categories- none ever could satisfy all the conditions at once. What we seem to be left with, therefore, is the conclusion that populist traits do tend to cluster into certain highly characteristic syndromes, but that none of these exhausts the entire range.<sup>39</sup>

Her work agrees with that of Peter Wiles, and Canovan credits Wiles' contribution to her definition of populism.

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<sup>38</sup> Canovan, *Populism*, 101.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 289-290.

Populism is any creed or movement based on the following major premiss: virtue resides in the simple people, who are the overwhelming majority and in their collective traditions. I hold that this premiss causes a political syndrome of surprising constancy.

Yet, Canovan's work extends beyond Wiles' definition; she argued, "That they tend to cluster into a fairly small number of different populist syndromes, none of which exhausts the wide ranges of populism."<sup>40</sup> Therefore, we can conclude that populist movements do not need to exhibit all of these traits to be populism, but they can exhibit traits from other populist movements to be populism.

### *Populist Movements in America*

The formation of the People's Party, also referred to as the Populist Party, in 1892 introduced the term populism into America. In response to severe economic constraints, southern and mid-western farmers united to form a grassroots movement known as the Farmers' Alliance. The Alliance did not have the financial capital they needed to exercise the movement on a national scale. As previously mentioned, Canovan stated when the Farmer's Alliance formed the People's Party; this is when the grassroots movement turned into Populism.

The Populist Party was the last citizen movement of the nineteenth century, where citizens from the western region of the United States were protesting against failing agriculture prices. Originating in Kansas, the movement represented small farmers who were members of the Farmers' Alliance, the Knights of Labor, the Grange movement,

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 301.



and the former Greenback Party. In 1892, the Populist Party adopted a platform that advocated free and unlimited coinage, railroad regulations, and ballot reforms measures.

During the 1892 presidential election, the Populists' nominated their own candidate, James Weaver, who carried five states but ultimately lost the election. The Populists' candidates did achieve some electoral success at this time by winning different local, state, and federal levels positions.<sup>41</sup> In 1896, the Populist Party ultimately took over the Democratic Party, when they supported the Democratic Party nominee, William Jennings Bryan; however, the Populist Party shortly after fell apart.<sup>42</sup>

America has seen episodes of populism long before the People's Party, from Shay's Rebellion in 1786, to the Whisky Rebellion in 1794, to the formation of the Republican Party. However, after the People's Party, populism did not reemerge until the 1930s, with Huey Long and his "Share Our Wealth" movement and Father Charles Coughlin radio protests, which both contributed to the passage of the New Deal.<sup>43</sup>

Residues of populist sentiment in America continued to follow the passage of the New Deal. In the 1950s, Senator Joseph McCarthy generated new elitist fear against Communism and the American political establishment. McCarthy's form of populism showed, for the first time, populism with a negative connotation, and at this time,

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<sup>41</sup> Herman Clarence Nixon, "The Cleavage within the Farmers' Alliance Movement," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 15, no. 1 (June 1928): 22-33, accessed March 3, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1891665?seq>. See also, John D. Hicks, "The Birth of the Populist Party," *Minnesota History* 9, no. 3 (September 1928): 219-247, accessed March 3, 2013. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20160737>.

<sup>42</sup> W. Gerber, "Future of Liberalism," *Editorial research reports Vol. II*, (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1971), accessed March 3, 2013, retrieved from <http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/cqresre1971091500>.

<sup>43</sup> R. L. Worsnop, "The New Populism," *Editorial Research Reports Vol. I* (1972), Washington, DC: CQ Press, accessed March 3, 2013, <http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/cqresre1972050300>.

scholars believe populism changed. *The people* were no longer arguing for progressive reforms, but *the people* were reacting against progressive reforms in America society.<sup>44</sup>

The following two decades after McCarthy's crusade, populist movements targeted both party establishments in America. In 1964, the Right faced the first challenge when the Goldwater movement mobilized conservatives to fight for the control of the Republican Party from the "Eastern Establishment."<sup>45</sup> On the conservative side, Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater advocated for limited Federal Government and states' right ahead of civil right. While the moderate side, New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller, symbolizing the eastern progressive wing of the Republican Party.<sup>46</sup> These men were fighting for the Republican Party nomination and behind both of these men stood dozens of activists. Conservative Republicans organized groups such as the Free Society Association, the United Republicans of America, and the Conservative Union, while the other side of the party formed the Council of Republican Organizations and Republicans for Progress.<sup>47</sup> The Conservative side ended up winning the Party nomination; however, the Republicans lost the election to President Lyndon B. Johnson.

The Goldwater movement united different groups of conservatives such as college Republicans, and disenchanted republicans' voters. Scholar John Bibby credited the

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<sup>44</sup>Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York: Knopf, 1955).

<sup>45</sup> For background information see, William Schneider, *The Political Legacy of the Reagan Years*, (Berlin, 1988) accessed March 3, 2013, <http://www.jfki.fu-berlin.de/research/publications/fraenkel/fraenkelvortraege02.pdf>. Kate Zernike, *Boiling Mad: Inside Tea Party America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2010). See Also, James A. Hikiya, "The Conservative 1960s," *Journal of American Studies* 37, no. 2 (August 2003): 201-227, accessed March 3, 2013. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27557328>.

<sup>46</sup> "The 1964 Elections," In *Congress and the Nation, 1945-1964*, vol. 1, 52 (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1965) accessed March 26, 2013, <http://library.cqpress.com/can/can45-4-3653-183509>.

<sup>47</sup> John F. Bibby, "The Goldwater Movement: It's Influence on the Republican Party in the 1970s," *American Behavioral Scientist* 17, no. 2 (December 1973): 249.

Goldwater movement for weakening the conservative forces in Congress. Bibby argued the Goldwater movement left the Republican congressional arena, divided on the bases of incumbent verse freshman while the loss of senior members changed leadership and committee organization. Overall, scholars remember the Goldwater movement for its genuine populism, the embracing of the middle class, and the attack on welfare states for taking the power and wealth and giving it to the poor.<sup>48</sup>

Since Goldwater, populist rhetoric remained intact under President Ronald Reagan. Reagan's form of populism was unique, by arguing *the people* could handle the economy better than the government. He united conservatives and rallied against big government. After Reagan, populism continued under George H. Bush, when Ross Perot captured populist rhetoric and rallied against anti-professional politicians in 1992 and 1994.<sup>49</sup>

While these are just a few examples of populism in American politics, we continue to see politicians using populism every day, as populists' rhetoric has become a core fixture in political life. Populist movements in America, provide a political home for *the people* who have felt disenfranchised from their government and their party establishments, and their greatest success is *the people's* ability to get politicians to adopt their political agendas.

### *Themes of American Populism*

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 249.

<sup>49</sup> Ronald P. Formisano, *For the People: American Populist Movements from the Revolution to the 1850s* (North Carolina: Caravan Books, 2008).

Populism in America can take form as a social movement or a form of political behavior. As a social movement, originally organized at a grass roots level, in a cultural view, it is a reaction against administrative or legislative intervention.<sup>50</sup> American populist movements can be both right and left, however, to be a populist movement, two elements must be present. The first element is a sign of economic or social distress or distrust. The other element is that the language of populism must always be the language of *the people* against *the elite*, where the elite can be big government or big business.

Michael Kazin claims there are four themes that shape populist movements in America. The first is Americanism, which means to understand and obey the will of the people. The second is Producerism, the belief that someone could take away something of value and give that to someone else. The third is opposition to the dominance of privileged elites, also known as anti-elitism, which involves the self-proclaimed outsiders, sharing a common threat, united by rallying against the perceived elites. While the fourth theme, the engagement of the battle, involves the movements' *people* tackling a perceived injustice while protecting the welfare of the common people.<sup>51</sup>

## **V. The Tea Party's Populism**

The origin of the Tea Party Movement dates back to an early protest in the American colonies against the British Parliament over taxes and the power to tax that many of the colonists considered unjust and unfair. On December 16, 1773, following the

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<sup>50</sup> Helmut Dubiel, "The Specter of Populism," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 31 (1986): 79-91, accessed March 3, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41035375>.

<sup>51</sup> Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: In America*, 12 - 17.

passage of the British Parliament's Tea Act of 1773, groups of colonist were responsible for dumping tea into the Boston Harbor. The following day, John Adams, documented the event in his journal, referring to it as the "Destruction of Tea." Adams wrote how he felt a great admiration of the "Patriots" responsible, and that this bold act, was so important, he considered it "Epocha in History."

This is the most magnificent Movement of all. There is a Dignity, a Majesty, a Sublimity, in this last Effort of the Patriots, that I greatly admire. The People should never rise, without doing something to be remembered — something notable and striking. This Destruction of the Tea is so bold, so daring, so firm, intrepid and inflexible, and it must have so important Consequences, and so lasting, that I cant but consider it as an Epocha in History.<sup>52</sup>

Adams continued his entry, questioning the consequences of these actions and whether the Destruction of Tea was necessary. Adams' affirmed that it was necessary, and if the tea had been landed, it "would be giving up the Principle of Taxation by Parliamentary Authority, against which the Continent have struggled for 10 years."<sup>53</sup>

The modern day Tea Party Movement grew from the original Boston Tea Party. Roughly fourteen months after the inauguration of President Obama, Rick Santelli, an on-air business news journalist, called for a Chicago 'Tea Party.' He did so, because

The government is promoting bad behavior. We certainly do not want to put stimulus pork and give people a whopping eight or ten dollars in their check and think that they ought to save it.

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<sup>52</sup> Robert C. Winthrop, Mr. Frothingham, Mr. Waterston, Dr. Ellis, Dr. Holmes, T. C. Amory and Mr. Davis, "Special Meeting, 1873. Tea-Party Anniversary," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 13 (1873-1875): 191, accessed August 11, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25079469>.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 191.

Santelli's rant, from the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, lambasted the Obama Administration's Homeowners Affordability and Stability Plan, a proposed \$75 billion government program to help homeowners avoid foreclosure. As Santelli's frustration grew, the traders around him began cheering and applauding, which prompted Santelli to propose an idea,

Why don't you put up a website to have people vote on the Internet as a referendum to see if we really want to subsidize the losers' mortgages; or would we like to at least buy cars and buy houses in foreclosure and give them to people that might have a chance to actually prosper down the road, and reward people that could carry the water instead of drink the water?<sup>54</sup>

Shortly after Santelli's outburst went viral, dozens of websites and social media pages began organizing around this tea party theme. This prompted Tea Party protest across the nation, protesting an array of issues such as the Democrat Party agenda, the Troubled Asset Relief Program, and the healthcare bill.<sup>55</sup>

Most scholars credit Santelli's outburst as igniting the Tea Party Movement into modern America. These scholars also credit the Internet as the momentum that lead to the movement popularity. While President Obama's Homeowners Affordability and Stability Plan, did ignite Santelli, there have been several other factors that affected American society over the last decade. The most noteworthy factor is the 2008 financial crisis,

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<sup>54</sup> Rick Santelli, "Rant of the Year," CNBC, aired February 19, 2009, accessed March 8, 2013, Transcript <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/headlines/2009/02/cnbcs-santelli>.

<sup>55</sup> Pater Wallsten and Danny Yadron, "Tea Party Movement Gathers Strength," *Wall Street Journal*, September 29, 2010, accessed March 7, 2013, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703882404575520252928390046.html>.

which left many Americans unemployed and resulted in trillions in lost wealth. This crisis caused government intervention under George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations. According to pollster Scott Rasmussen, the way the Bush and Obama administrations handled the economic crisis triggered the Tea Party's rise.<sup>56</sup>

The financial situation provided a breeding ground for a populist movement, with polls indicating, a third of likely American voters identified themselves as part of the Tea Party Movement.<sup>57</sup> While there is no formal organization or membership, there are many different groups and activist that they believe speaks for the movement. Ranging from dozens of national organizations like the Tea Party Nation, the Tea Party Patriots, Tax Day Tea Party, Americans for Limited Government, Americans for Prosperity, and FreedomWorks, to politicians and news commentators, such as Sara Palin, Glen Beck, and Newt Gingrich.

Since populist movements do not need to exhibit every trait to be populism, the Tea Party Movement possesses the two essential elements to make it populist. First, like populist movements in the past, the Tea Party Movement emerged in a time of economic hardships in America, where the unemployment rate was at the highest since 1982 and the foreclosure rate increased by 81 percent.<sup>58</sup> The second is that the language of populism must always be the language of *the people* against *the elite*, which polls do

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<sup>56</sup>Dan Weil, "Rasmussen: Tea Party Shows Weakness of GOP Establishment," *Newsmax.com*, September 19, 2010, under "Inside Cover," accessed February 1, 2013, <http://www.newsmax.com/InsideCover/ScottRasmussenReportpollster/2010/09/18/id/370770>.

<sup>57</sup> *Rasmussen Reports*, "34% Say They or Someone Close to Them Part of the Tea Party Movement," accessed February 1, 2013, [http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public\\_content/politics/general\\_politics/January\\_2013/just\\_8\\_now\\_say\\_they\\_are\\_tea\\_party\\_members](http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/politics/general_politics/January_2013/just_8_now_say_they_are_tea_party_members).

<sup>58</sup> Christopher J. Goodman and Steven M. Mance, "Employment loss and the 2007-09 Recession: An Overview," *Monthly Labor Review* 124, no. 4 (April 2011). [http://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2012/recession/pdf/recession\\_bls\\_spotlight.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2012/recession/pdf/recession_bls_spotlight.pdf) (accessed March 3, 2013).

show that the overwhelming majority of Americans (65 percent) are unhappy in the direction that America is heading.<sup>59</sup> While another poll taken in 2010, shows that most Americans (71 percent) were dissatisfied with the way the nation was being governed.<sup>60</sup> The Tea Partiers are clearly echoing this discontent and has offered a political home for Americans that have felt disenfranchised from their government and the party establishments.

Since the Tea Party is a populist response against the Washington establishment, political pundits believe the Tea Party Movement is a threat to the Republican Party. Commentators believe the Tea Party endorsed candidates gain entry into the House, in 2010 and 2012, by ousting established Republicans' seats in several primary elections. For example, in 2010, Christine O'Donnell, a Tea Party favorite, who the Tea Party Express endorsed, defeated the former Governor and U.S. House of Representative Mike Castle in the primary election, and after the 2012 primary elections, Tea Party Express candidate Ted Yoho defeated twelve terms incumbent Cliff Stearns. This same election cycle, after serving in the U.S. Senate for thirty-six years, Richard Lugar faced a similar fate after losing the primary election to Richard Mourdouck, also endorsed by Tea Party Express.<sup>61</sup> Due to this, many in the Republican establishment blame their internal struggles on the movement.

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<sup>59</sup> *Rasmussen Reports*, "Write Direction of Wrong Track," December 14-20, 2009. [http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public\\_content/archive/mood\\_of\\_america\\_archive/right\\_direction\\_or\\_wrong\\_track/right\\_direction\\_history\\_2009](http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/archive/mood_of_america_archive/right_direction_or_wrong_track/right_direction_history_2009) (accessed March 31, 2013).

<sup>60</sup> *Gallup Polls*, "Americans Express historic Negativity Toward U.S. Government," September 26, 2011 <http://www.gallup.com/poll/149678/americans-express-historic-negativity-toward-government.aspx> (accessed March 31, 2013).



However, the Tea Party Movement is far from the only source of causing this clash. Scholars, pundits, and Tea Party supporters have failed to defend the movement from these cries, if anything; the movement has been a mask and has disguised the internal disputes within the Republican Party, which has existed since Reagan left office.

## **VI. The Tea within the Republican Party**

A poll taken in March of 2009, showed that only 27 percent of Americans held a favorable view of the Republican Party,<sup>62</sup> while another poll taken by CBS News shows that less than half (40 percent) of Republican surveyed believed the Republican Party's leadership was moving the party in the right direction.<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, a third poll taken later that same month, indicated that only 20 percent of Republicans believed the party was standing up for traditional Republican issues, such as reducing the size of government and cutting taxes.<sup>64</sup> In sum, all these polls indicate that the Republican Party was sitting in an unfavorable position and potentially could face significant changes in the upcoming 2010 election.

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<sup>61</sup> Joshua Miller and Kyle Trygstad, "Late Summer Primaries Send Five More House Incumbents Packing," *Roll Call*, September 10, 2012, <http://library.cqpress.com/cqweekly/weeklyreport112-000004148018>(Accessed March 7, 2013).

<sup>62</sup> Quinnipiac University Poll, April 21-27, 2009. Retrieved from iPoll Database, *The Roper Center of Public Opinion Research*, University of Connecticut. [http://ropercenter.uconn.edu/data\\_access/ipoll/ipoll.html](http://ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html). (accessed March 20, 2013).

<sup>63</sup> *CBS News Poll*, March 12-16, 2009. Retrieved from iPoll Database, The Roper Center of Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. [http://ropercenter.uconn.edu/data\\_access/ipoll/ipoll.html](http://ropercenter.uconn.edu/data_access/ipoll/ipoll.html) (accessed March 20, 2013).

<sup>64</sup> *Pew Research Center for the People*, March 2009. Retrieved from the iPoll Databank, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut, accessed March 20, 2013, <http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/517.pdf>.

On July 16, 2010, Representative Michelle Bachmann introduced the Tea Party Caucus, where Republican members quickly jumped onto the Tea Party bandwagon. In the summer of 2010, fifty-five House Republicans identified themselves as Tea Party Caucus members.<sup>65</sup> The caucus emerged shortly after a CNN poll indicated that an overwhelming amount of Republicans (73 percent) would be more likely to support a candidate for Congress who was part of the Tea Party Movement.<sup>66</sup> During the 2010 elections, the Republican gained eighty-four new conservative members in the House of Representatives, which scholars heavily credited to the Tea Party Movement. However, roughly, three years later, pundits claim that the movement has caused some type of internal clash within the Republican Party.

At the end of the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, during the fiscal cliff battle, Republicans were at constant odds over increasing the tax rates. House Speaker John Boehner and his leadership team could not secure the votes in their caucus when trying to push Speaker Boehner's "Plan B" to the House floor for a vote. The heart of Speaker Boehner's proposal was a permanent tax increase for all Americans making over a million dollars a year. The Tea Party members could not support this plan because they vowed to restore fiscal sanity to Congress and never increase taxes on the America people. Speaker Boehner said: "The House did not take up the tax measure today because it did not have

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<sup>65</sup> Gervais and Morris, "Reading the Tea Leaves: Understanding Tea Party Caucus Membership in the US House of Representatives."

<sup>66</sup> *CNN/Opinion Research Corporation Poll*, May 25, 2010. Retrieved from iPoll Database, The Roper Center of Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut, accessed March 20, 2013, <http://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnn/2010/images/05/25/re18cyt7.pdf>.

sufficient support from our members to pass.”<sup>67</sup> This vote signified a division over tax increases.

More recently, was a unique case where nine members of the Republican coalition attempted to oust Speaker Boehner from Speakership, pundits proclaimed this as a sign of internal Republican dispute. As scientist scholar Paul Hasbrouck, wrote in 1927, “The vote on the caucus nominee for Speaker has come to be the critical test of party allegiance.”<sup>68</sup> These commentators also accused Speaker Boehner’s dismissal of four Tea Partiers from their committee assignments as a sign of an internal dispute, indicating this was between the Republican establishment and the Tea Partiers.<sup>69</sup>

Nevertheless, as Congress moves forward, the internal struggle in the Republican Party has become increasingly more apparent. On February 12, 2013, during the State of the Union Address, President Obama laid out his second-term agenda to the nation. The Republican Party chose Florida Senator Marco Rubio to provide the Republican Party’s official response, while Kentucky Senator Rand Paul was chose to deliver the Tea Party’s response- by way of the Internet.<sup>70</sup> It is important to note that Rubio and Paul are highly

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<sup>67</sup> “Boehner Abruptly Scraps Plan B Vote in Setback,” CNBC.com, December 20, 2012, accessed March 2, 2013, <http://www.cnbc.com/id/100330915>.

<sup>68</sup>Paul Hasbrouck, *Party Government in the House of Representatives* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1927), 35, quoted in Jeffery A. Jenkins and Charles Stewart, III, *Fighting for the Speakership: The House and the Rise of Party Government* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 291.

<sup>69</sup>Kevin Freking, “GOP leaders remove 4 from plum House committees,” *Yahoo News*, December 7, 2012, accessed March 7, 2013, <http://news.yahoo.com/gop-leaders-remove-4-plum-house-committees-195415482--finance.html>.

<sup>70</sup> Marco Rubio, “Republican Party State of the Union 2013 Response,” (speech, Washington, DC, February 12, 2013). accessed on March 30, 2013, <http://swampland.time.com/2013/02/12/sen-marco-rubios-response-to-obamas-state-of-the-union-address-transcript/>. Also, Rand Paul, “Tea Party State of the Union 2013 Response,” (speech, Washington, DC, February 12, 2013). accessed on March 30, 2013, <http://theulstermanreport.com/2013/02/13/senator-rand-pauls-response-to-barack-obamas-state-of-the-union-address/>.

popular with the Tea Party Movement, and these speeches indicate that the Tea Party and the Republican Party both agree that the government needs to be more fiscally responsible. However, beyond this, they shared very little.

As just stated, the State of the Union responses shared similar concerns with the Obama Administration; however, both rebuttals highlighted the different voices with the Republican Party. For example, Senator Rubio's response addressed an important concern that Senator Paul failed to discuss. First, Rubio spoke about traditional family values, the need to provide a safety net for the community, while highlighting a top issue for social conservatives. Rubio stated that he believed America was exceptional because "every life, at every stage, is precious, and that everyone everywhere has a God-given right to go as far as their talents and hard work will take them." Senator Paul on the other hand, stated he believed America was exceptional because "it was founded upon the notion that everyone should be free to pursue life, liberty and happiness." Both of these men share some element of the Republican Party's principles, both advocating for a smaller role of government and balancing the federal budget, however, Paul's response failed to mention any of the social conservative wings concerns, and clearly stood behind the libertarians' wing belief of individualism.

Another concern that is worth noting is an element that Rubio briefly mentioned, that Paul mentioned as a point of disagreement within the Republican Party. Paul criticized the Republican establishment for not cutting defense spending, which was a clear indication that he stood against the party. Paul's comment highlighted his belief that the Republican Party must move along in the discussion on defense spending, Paul said, "it is time Republicans realize that military spending is not immune to waste and fraud."

Where Rubio response appears to disagree, he stated, “America continues to be indispensable to the goal of global liberty, prosperity and safeguarding human right. The world is a better place when America is the strongest nation on earth.” While Rubio did not elaborate more on his foreign policy or his view on defense spending, Paul’s rebuttal highlights that this is a contentious issue within the Republican Party.

The 2013 State of the Union response shows a good range of voices within the Republican Party, a party united for limited government, fiscal responsibility and constitutionalism, and that same party facing strong strains over the role of government with social issues, and an even larger wing in the party that advocates a more hawkish stance on foreign policy. To solve the internal dispute within the Republican Party, party leaders must find a way to appease to the libertarian faction that share a more hawkish view on foreign affairs and defense spending, while making sure they are not ignoring the party’s base of traditional, fiscally responsible conservatives.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The 1980 Presidential election was an enormous success for the Republican Party. Following President Reagan victory over the Democratic incumbent Jimmy Carter, the Republican Party gained thirty-five seats in the House of Representatives, twelve seats in the United States Senate, and gained a net increase of four new Republican Governors. Reagan’s success resulted in not only a drastic increase of the Republican Party on a federal level, but also a growing presence within the States. The Republican Party’s success in the 1980s is credited to the work of Ronald Reagan, and his ability to unite

members from five different conservative wings into one “Big Tent,” by uniting these five wings under one issue, taxing and spending.

For the next twenty years, Reagan’s “Big Tent” remained intact and by 2004, Republican strength was at a peak. However, within a quick four years the Party lost the House, the Senate, and eventually the White House in the 2008 election. This was only the second time since Reagan’s “Big Tent” emerged that the party did not hold onto one of the three Houses, which left the Republican Party in shambles.

However, the emergence of the Tea Party Movement, with a strong populist message of antigovernment, provided hope for the Republican Party and a strong possibility for conservatism to reemerge in America. Scholars and political pundits credit the Tea Party Movement for playing an active role in the Republican Party regaining the strength it needed to capture control of the House of Representatives in the 2010-midterm elections. Perhaps, one could suggest that the Tea Party is simply the old libertarian wing working with elements of the social conservative wing trying to assert themselves louder.

However, roughly, three years later, pundits claim that the movement has caused some type of internal clash within the Republican Party. However, although the Tea Party regularly receives blame for the clash inside the Republican Establishment, the movement itself is not to blame for in-house arguments within the Republican party, if anything, it has merely served as bold and appealing disguise over a conservative party that has slowly abandoned the principles of small government and fiscal responsibility.

Like Reagan did before, the Republican Party has come together under one tent, that remains focused on cutting taxes and government spending, however, without a

party leader, the modern day GOP faces many future obstacles to tackle, before being able to win back their role in American politics.

## CHAPTER 2

### *The Moderates and the Current State of the Democratic Party in Congress*

#### **I. Introduction**

Understanding the origin of political parties has been a central concern for historians and political scientists alike. Today, scholars taking up the study tend to focus more intensively on the current state of the Republican Party due to the parties minority status. The infighting and battling factions in the modern day Republican Party has consumed political pundits and commentators, leaving the American people to view the Democratic Party as a more unified group. These pundits have ignored the fact that since the 2008 Presidential election of Barack Obama both parties have had significant changes to their party's composition in Congress. Although there is no big new thing in the Democratic Party like the Tea Party Movement, the Party has lost their moderate and conservative wings in Congress since the 2008 election.

Political scholars have linked the loss of party moderates to party polarization, and today's scholars agree that the contemporary political parties are more polarizing than ever before. While scholars discuss polarization neutrally, political pundits have placed the Republican Party as the main culprit. Pundits look at the party's inability to vote on a unified front as a signal of party infighting, arguing that the conservative faction has pushed the party further to the right. Some pundits' focus on the loss of the Republican moderates,<sup>71</sup> others focus on the Tea Party Movement,<sup>72</sup> but both conclude

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<sup>71</sup>Dan Balz, "Tea Party's Emergence, Influence is no Surprise to Scholars," *The Washington Post*, September 11, 2011, accessed October 1, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/888272840?Accountid=45336>.



that the party has shifted further away from the Democratic Party. While there is plenty of blame to go around, this chapter does not tend to focus on party polarization, but rather the current state of the Democratic Party. In this chapter, I shed light on the modern Democratic Party and answer the question, where have the moderate Democrats gone? Although, scholars know that the disappearance of moderates in Congress is not a new phenomenon, this chapter seeks to answer this question by only focusing on the modern Democratic Party, perhaps the lost of moderate Republicans have aided the lost of modern day moderate Democrats? Therefore, this chapter begins with an overview of the academic literature on party moderates and discusses why these moderate members have disappeared in Congress. Next this chapter will seek to explain how as moderate members were becoming increasingly scarce in Congress, the party's moderate caucuses' became a vehicle for moderate members to exercise their voice outside of their major party, influence the legislative agenda, and build coalitions.

Following this brief literature review, this chapter will provide some background of the Democratic Party and explains how the Party shifted from the liberal dominance to the moderates' control. It then analyzes the rise and decline of the moderates in the current Democratic Party under President Obama. It concludes that parties react off one another, and as the Republican Party lost their moderates, moderate Democrats lost their political center as well.

## **II. Literature Review**

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<sup>72</sup>Jan Tracy, "GOP Moderates Shrinking in Numbers - and Impact," *Boston Globe*, Jul 27, 2011, accessed September 18, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/879085564?accountid=45336>.

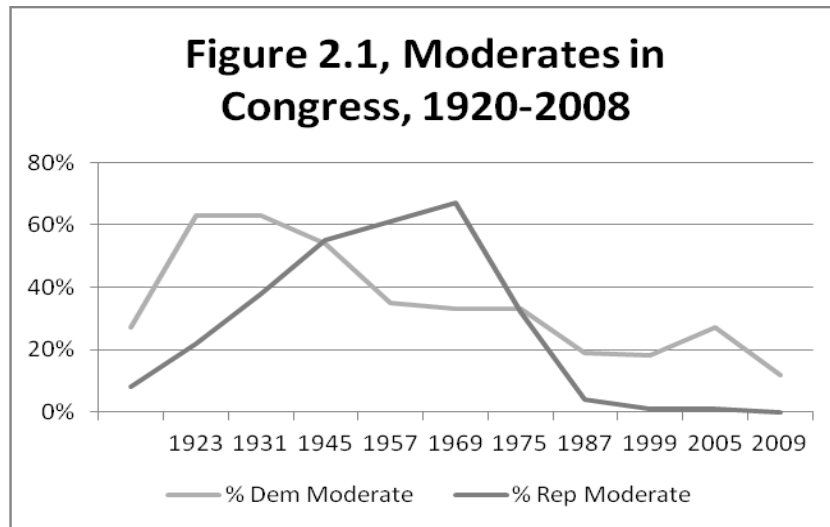
Up until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the parties in Congress were ideologically diverse. That is, both parties had a significant number of members who shared similar ideological beliefs with the other party. Within the Republican Party, there were liberals, known as “Rockefeller Republicans,” and within the Democratic Party, there were conservatives known as “Boil Weevils.” Scholars classify these members as party misfits due to their willingness to vote across party lines. Today the “four party politics” that once existed has transformed into two ideological cohesive parties.<sup>73</sup>

The most common way to measure party moderates is through Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal’s DW-Nominate scores, based on all non-unanimous roll call votes, ranging from -1.00 (most liberal) to +1.00 (most conservative). DW-Nominate score greater than -0.25 depicts moderate Democrats and scores less than 0.25 portray moderate Republicans.<sup>74</sup> Figure 2.1 shows that during the 1920s moderates began to grow in both parties, where the Democrats peaked in the 1940s and slowly declined till 2007, while the number of moderate Republicans peaked in the 1970s and drastically declined from there out, reaching extinction by 2004.

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<sup>73</sup> Richard Fleisher and John R. Bond, “The Shrinking Middle in the US Congress,” *British Journal of Political Science* 34, no. 3 (July 2004): 429-457, accessed August 27, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4092328>.

<sup>74</sup> “The Polarization of Congressional Parties,” last modified January 18, 2013, [http://voteview.com/political\\_polarization.asp](http://voteview.com/political_polarization.asp).



Since the development of DW-Nominate scores, scholars have used these measurements to study polarization along with the loss of party moderates in Congress. Most pundits and scholars define the political center simply as members who sit in the ideologically center of the two parties.<sup>75</sup> However, according to party politics scholars, the political center consists of two constituencies, cross-pressured members and party moderates. Political Scientist Richard Fleisher and John R. Bond define cross-pressured members as those with ideological preferences closer to the centre of the other party than their own. In comparison, moderates according to Bond and Fleisher are members with policy preferences in the middle of the ideology spectrum of both parties. They view moderate and cross-pressured members as partisan non-conformists- pivotal players in the congressional arena- that have vanished in recent years.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Sarah A. Binder, “The Disappearing Political Center: Congress and the Incredible Shrinking Middle,” *The Brookings Review* 14, no. 4 (Fall 1996): 36-39, accessed October 20, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20080686>.

<sup>76</sup> Fleisher and Bond, “The Shrinking Middle in the US Congress.”

Using DW-Nominate scores, Fleisher and Bond identify moderates as members with scores in the middle of the ideological distribution (-0.2 to +0.2) and cross-pressured members are those members who sit on the other side of the scale (for Democrats scores greater than zero and Republicans scores less than zero). Their work showed that during the 1980s, the number of moderate and cross-pressured members began to decline in both parties and chambers, and as the trend continued in the 1990s, the cross-pressured members in Congress have disappeared. While arguing this trend first emerged in the 1970s within the GOP, their studies showed that by the twentieth century, the moderates were nearly extinct in the GOP, while a small amount remained within the Democratic Party.<sup>77</sup> Fleisher and Bond's work reinforces Poole and Rosenthal's findings- that moderates are in fact vanishing.

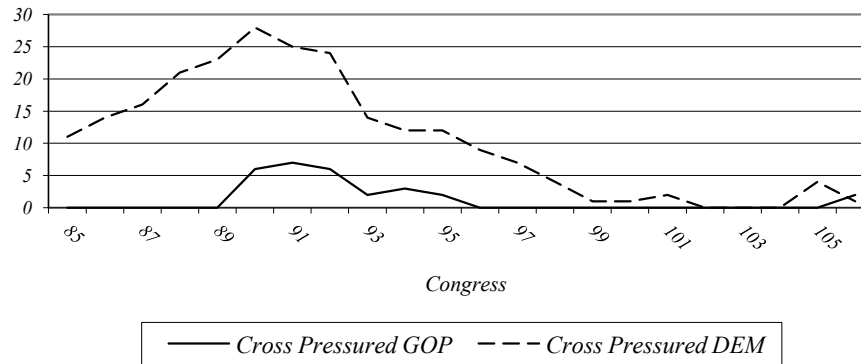
Figure 2.2 shows the findings of Fleisher and Bond, which show that cross-pressured members no longer exist in either party, which explain why scholars have changed the definition of moderates. The later work done by Fleisher, Bond, and Jeffrey M. Stonecash define moderates as the members who sit in the middle of the ideology spectrum.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Jon R. Bond, Richard Fleisher, and Jeffrey M. Stonecash, "The Rise and Decline of Moderates in the U.S. House and Senate, 1900-2006" (presentation, Annual National Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 2-5, 2009).

<sup>78</sup> Bond, Fleisher, and Stonecash, "The Rise and Decline of Moderates in the U.S. House and Senate, 1900-2006."

**Figure 2.2 Cross-pressured Members in Congress, 85th - 106th**



### *Explaining the Decline*

Typically, moderates disappear through replacement or conversion. Replacement occurs when moderate representatives leave Congress because of defeat, retirement, death, or pursuing another office. Conversion occurs when moderates shift to another party or become independent political actors.<sup>79</sup> Fleisher and Bond found that around 90 percent of moderates in Congress disappear because of replacement, while member conversion represents less than 10 percent of moderate losses. However, they believe these members also decline because of interrelated changes such as changes made by the politician, activities of party officials and activist during candidate recruitment, and changes in the

<sup>79</sup> Sean M. Theriault, "Party Polarization in the US Congress: Member Replacement and Member Adaption," *Party Politics* 12, no 4 (July 2006): 483-505, accessed October 20, 2013, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1354068806064730>.

behavior of voters.<sup>80</sup> In addition, the later work of these scholars found that moderates leave the party when the party's agenda shift.<sup>81</sup>

Furthermore the loss of moderates in Congress have been from the growth of right wing and liberal media, outside social movements, and the redistricting every ten years done within the states. In sum, Poole and Rosenthal explain, "In the early 1970s, there was considerable overlap of the two political parties. In the past ten years that overlap has almost completely disappeared."<sup>82</sup> This explains that as the two parties pull further away from one another, moderates disappear in Congress. The losses of these members have caused an increase in legislative gridlock and lack of political compromise, which explains party polarization in today's political arena.

### *Congressional Caucuses*

In order to be capable to bargain with leadership both parties have formed congressional organizations. These organizations allow members to identify the differences they have with the larger party. Studies show these organizations, better known as informal caucuses, are distinguished between six categories, and form upon: party; shared issue interest; and representation (national, regional, state/district, and

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<sup>80</sup> Fleisher and Bond, "The Shrinking Middle in the US Congress."

<sup>81</sup> Bond, Fleisher, and Stonecash, "The Rise and Decline of Moderates in the U.S. House and Senate, 1900-2006."

<sup>82</sup> Keith T. Poole, "The Decline and Rise of Party Polarization in Congress During the Twentieth Century," *Extensions* (Fall 2005): 1-6, accessed October 1, 2013, <http://www.ou.edu/special/albertctr/extensions/fall2005/Poole.pdf>.

state/district issues).<sup>83</sup> The political parties have numerous factional groups that have manifested in Congress. The first to emerge was an effort by liberal House Democrats who wanted to remove the party's power from the hands of Southern Democrats.

After the 1958 elections, House Democrats gained 49 seats, leaving many party liberals anticipating an active legislative session. However, the 86<sup>th</sup> Congress proved to be less fruitful, as the conservative coalition of Republican and Southern Democrats worked together to block many of the party's legislative proposals. Frustrated with the lack of political capital, liberal Democrats formed the Democratic Study Group (DSG). The DSG served as a formal organization to work as a counterforce to the conservative coalition.<sup>84</sup> However, as the Democratic Party was becoming more liberal due to the success for the DSG, conservative and moderate Democrats formed their own organization known as the Democratic Research Organization (DRO).<sup>85</sup> As the Republican Party made large gains during the 1980 election of Ronald Reagan, the Democrats lost control of the White House and the U.S. Senate. While remaining in control of the House, liberal and conservative Democrats divided over what strategy the party should adopt toward the Reagan Administration. Discouraged conservative Democrats broke away from the DRO and went on to form the Conservative Democratic Forum (CDF).

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<sup>83</sup> Susan Webb Hammond, "Congressional Caucuses and Party Leaders in the House of Representatives," *Political Science Quarterly* 106, no. 2 (Summer 1991): 277-294, accessed October 20, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2152230>.

<sup>84</sup> Theo Lippman, "A Liberal Power Center: The Democratic Study Group," *The Sun*, March 24, 1969, accessed August 27, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/539182228?accountid=45336>.

<sup>85</sup> Marjorie Hunter, "Capitol Hill Clubs Have Many Roles," *New York Times*, December 26, 1976, accessed August 27, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/120232358?accountid=45336>.

Informally known as the “Boil Weevil,” the 47 members in the organization wished to move the Democratic Party to the mainstream views of America, which meant embracing conservative values.<sup>86</sup> The Boll Weevils quickly became key players to Ronald Reagan’s budget proposals, but by joining with the Republican Party, the group gave conservatives more clout. As Reagan’s policies quickly disenchanted the group and the following election the Democratic Party gained 27 seats, which flushed out the Boll Weevil’s influence, and with a smaller portion of the party, the Boll Weevils quietly died out.<sup>87</sup>

Joining an organized faction could be a significant value for a member. Robin Kolodny claims that these caucuses allow members to form allies in their party and if necessary form a bloc that is strong enough to oppose party leadership.<sup>88</sup> However, forming a functioning factional group is not as easy as it sounds and many factors play against these members and the level of influence they have in the party. Depending on the type of caucus, the minority/majority position of the party, the size of the group, and the party’s view on a particular political issue could potentially halt the caucus’s agenda and could eventually lead to the demise of the informal caucus or the growth of another.

As moderate members were becoming increasingly scarce in Congress, the moderate caucuses’ have been a vehicle for moderate members to exercise their voice

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<sup>86</sup> Judith Miller, “House Democrats Grumble That Leaders Are Drifting: Delay in Democratic Response,” *New York Times*, February 22, 1981, accessed August 27, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/121879590?accountid=45336>.

<sup>87</sup> Norman Ornstein, “The Rising Republican Centrists: Congress's New Power Brokers,” *The Washington Post*, November 20, 1994, accessed August 27, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/751030542?accountid=45336>.

<sup>88</sup> Robin Kolodny, “Moderate Party Factions in the US House of Representatives,” in *The State of the Parties: The Changing Role of Contemporary American Parties*, ed. John C. Green and Daniel M. Shea (Lanham, MD, Boulder, CO, New York and Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999): 271-285.



outside of the major parties, influence the legislative agenda, and build coalitions.

Currently, moderate Democrats voice their differences from the party and influence the Democratic agenda through the Blue Dog Coalition and New Democrat Coalition.

Today, political pundits no longer group moderates and cross-pressured members separately but refer to both groups as moderates. Contemporary wisdom view party moderates as members whose ideological beliefs are closer to the midpoint of the two parties. However, identifying what representatives make up the middle is less clear. While, academic scholars identify moderates off roll call votes, the party moderate caucuses are more popular among political pundits.

Political pundits pay particular attention to party moderates, scrutinizing every election cycle to explain the loss of these members. While these pundits identify moderates based on their caucus membership, these groups do not necessarily vote as a bloc, as members typically vote for the better good of their party. As moderate, Blue Dog Democrat Allen Boyd said, “At some point in time, you have to put your personal agenda and ambitions aside for the good of the country and certainly for the party.”<sup>89</sup>

Thus the exact moderates in the Democratic Party cannot be measured, as membership in these caucuses is neither assigned nor mandatory, any members can align themselves with these informal groups, even members who are not moderates joining these caucuses leave them the ability to claim to be. The following section explains the growth of the Party’s moderate faction.

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<sup>89</sup> Phillip Rucker, “Midterm Uproot Blue Dogs from Power and Cut Ranks in Half,” *The Washington Post*, November 19, 2010, accessed August 27, 2013, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/11/18/AR2010111806780.html>.

### III. The New Deal Coalition... and Its Factional Breakdown

Conventional wisdom holds that within the past hundred years there have been two defining moments for the Democratic Party. The first refers to the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century populist movement, which fortified the reputation of the party as the party of the “common man.” In this phase, the Democrats represented the party of small government and laissez-faire economics. The later was the passage of the New Deal, which contributed to a significant shift in the way American political parties approached governing and secured the Democratic Party the position of the majority party between 1932 and 1952. At this point, the party became the party of big government.<sup>90</sup>

FDR’s election created an unstoppable Democratic coalition, tying together a diverse group of interest southerners, the working-middle class, African Americans, unions, farmers, immigrants, Catholic, and Jews. Political scholars Gary Miller and Norman Schofield believed the coalition worked because FDR emphasized the “anti-business, pro-government economic liberalism of both southern farmers and northern labor.”<sup>91</sup>

In the following decade, the Democrats remained the dominant national party. However, the New Deal coalition could not survive the social changes of the time. After the southern wing vacated the party, African Americans represented the dominant

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<sup>90</sup> Thomas R. Rochon and Ravi Roy, “Adaptation of the American Democratic Party in an Era of Globalization,” *International Journal of Political Economy* 31, no. 3 (2001): 12-32, accessed July 14, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40470784>.

<sup>91</sup> Gary Miller and Norman Schofield, “The Transformation of the Republican and Democratic Party Coalitions in America,” *Perspectives on Politics* 6, no. 3 (August 2008): 433-50, accessed July 30, 2013, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1537592708081218>.

Democratic group in the southern states.<sup>92</sup> With a weakened coalition, the Vietnam War further factionalized the party, as new social movements formed the “New Left.”

After the party lost the White House in 1968, the Democratic Party faced an array of intraparty conflicts. The final straw that broke the New Deal Coalition was the 1972 nomination of George McGovern. McGovern’s nomination was after the party reformed their nominee selection process and adopted a quota system to assure fair representation of minorities and women in the party. Critics were concerned that McGovern would move the “New Left” into the Democratic Party. Moderate Democrats, who opposed the McGovern campaign, were concerned about the future of the party, and formed the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM).

The neoconservative organization called for “restoring the party to its rightful place of leadership,” urging the Democratic Party to return to its Democratic base.<sup>93</sup> The CDM members were economic liberals, hawkish on foreign affairs and put off by social issues. This moderate wing insisted that the reforms to the party’s nominee system shifted the power to the minorities in the party and furthered the left’s control over the party.<sup>94</sup>

Despite a Democratic victory in 1976, with the election of President Jimmy Carter, a southern Governor, the Democratic Party continued to struggle with their factional components. Despite his southern status, Carter did not shift the party’s power

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<sup>92</sup> Charles S. Bullock, “Congressional Voting and the Mobilization of a Black Electorate in the South,” *Journal of Politics* 43 (1981): 662-682, accessed July 14, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2130631>.

<sup>93</sup> “Can the Wing Take Off? *Wall Street Journal (1923 - Current File)*, November 11, 1983, accessed July 30, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/134771285?accountid=45336>.

<sup>94</sup> Donald T. Critchlow, “McGovern Commission Changes Led to Gridlock,” *Arizona Republic*, November 10, 2012, accessed July 16, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/115195099?accountid=45336>.

back to the southern conservative wing. The 1980 Democratic nomination revealed an attempt to reassert the liberal control over the party, when Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, a mainstream Democrat, unsuccessfully challenged Carter for the party's presidential ticket. By the end of Carter's first term, the Democrats were without a coalition, as one scholar remarked, "Carter provided a model for how to alienate all of its various wings simultaneously."<sup>95</sup> Carter lost the 1980 Presidential Election to Republican Governor Ronald Reagan of California. Carter's loss signified the end of the Democrats dominating national politics, and marked the newly emerging dominance of the Republican Party in America.

The demise of the New Deal Coalition drastically changed the Democratic Party. During the New Deal Coalition, the party operated within its two factional divides- Northern and Southern Democrats, at times, who differed on economic beliefs. Once the Southern wing began vacating the party and social issues emerged, those who stayed in the party had to form a bridge between the party's economic positions and liberal beliefs.

#### **IV. The Growth of the Moderate Faction**

The moderate wing of the Democratic Party dates back to the 1984 landslide defeat of Walter Mondale to Ronald Reagan. Concerned about the direction of the party, a group of prominent moderate Democrats from southern and western states established the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC). The DLC quickly emerged as the party's center-right, pushing for a more mainstream agenda, by emphasizing pro-growth, pro-

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<sup>95</sup> Ronald Radosh, *The Demise of the Democratic Party, 1964-1996, Divided They Fell* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996): 188-189.

defense and anti-crime themes, they believed the key component for the party to remain competitive was the need to capturing the white middle-class voters who had become “Reagan Democrats.”<sup>96</sup>

Despite the formation of the DLC, the Democratic Party nominated northern liberal Michael Dukakis for the 1988 Democratic ticket. While some argue that the Dukakis nomination nudged the party away from interest-group politics, the DLC felt the nominee lacked the ability to produce a philosophy that would attract new voters and govern the nation. Al From, the executive director of the DLC argued, "Until we get a candidate who so clearly defines the party that he captures the imagination of the American people, we're probably not going to have the next true alignment in the political system."<sup>97</sup> That year Dukakis lost the election to Reagan’s Vice President, George Bush, which strengthened the DLC’s argument.

Four years later, with the backing from the DLC, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton won the White House. During the campaign Clinton portrayed himself as “a different kind of Democrat,” running on a platform that offered a “third way” by sitting between the traditional Democratic factions. The Democrats “third way” approach was successful, and that year the Democrats carried thirty two states along with the District of Colombia and won 370 of the 538 electoral votes. Clinton’s supports showed similar signs of the

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<sup>96</sup> Rhodes Cook, "Clinton Picks the GOP Lock on the Electoral College," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* (November 7, 1992): 3548-3553, accessed September 10, 2013, <http://library.cqpress.com/cqweekly/WR102 408981>.

<sup>97</sup> Robert W. Merry, "Dukakis and the Search for a New Hurrah," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* (July 16, 1988): 1943-45, accessed August 27, 2013, <http://library.cqpress.com/cqweekly/WR100403943>.

old Democratic coalition: the working class, African Americans, middle-aged whites, Jews and Catholic, working women, and single white men.<sup>98</sup>

### *The Growth of the Democrats Moderate Caucuses*

When Clinton took office in 1993, the Democratic Party looked healthy, holding the majority in two branches. While Clinton was able to keep the factions in the party united during his campaign, uniting the social conservative right with the economic populism of the left, however, soon after election, the Democrats were again in ideological and policy disarray and could not unite around an agenda.

As Clinton began working on his agenda, he found himself positioned between the liberal and conservative wings within his party. The healthcare debate displayed how Clinton positioned between the wings of the Democratic Party. When Clinton ran for office he vowed to enact universal health care, which the moderate and more conservatives Democrats did not like, and with his failure to pass this measure caused the more liberal wing of the party to feel frustrated and betrayed.<sup>99</sup> A second example is when Clinton promised to reform the welfare system, which his agenda included working requirements in order to receive welfare benefits. The proposal was different from that of liberals in the party, who could not support a work base requirement.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Paul J. Quirk and Jon K. Dalager, "The election: A "New Democrat" and a new kind of presidential campaign," in *The Elections of 1992*, ed. Michael Nelson (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 1993), accessed August 28, 2013, <http://library.cqpress.com/elections/elec92-131-6641-382464>.

<sup>99</sup> Michael Nelson, ed., *Guide to the Presidency, Fourth Edition*, (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2008), chap. 2, "Bill Clinton and the American Presidency," accessed July 14, 2013, <http://library.cqpress.com/presidencyguide/g2p4e1-904-36755-1851059>

<sup>100</sup> Al From, "Hey, Mom, What's a New Democrat?," *The Washington Post*, June 6, 1998, accessed August 27, 2013, [http://www.dlc.org/ndol\\_ci905d.html?kaid=85&subid=65&contentid=853](http://www.dlc.org/ndol_ci905d.html?kaid=85&subid=65&contentid=853).

With the liberal base of the party controlling Congress, Clinton found he was unable to pass his moderate agenda. The new moderates in the Democratic Party felt betrayed and when the liberal Democrats who controlled Congress passed gun-control measures, the conservative faction in the party revolted.<sup>101</sup> The 1994 midterm election proved the hardest for the southern conservative wing; the election resulted in the loss of 54 seats, which cost them control of the House for the first time since 1946. The following Congress, the ranks of the moderate and conservative Democrats decimated, leaving only a high percentage of liberals among the Democrats in Congress.<sup>102</sup>

In the wake of the party's sweeping losses in the 1994 midterm election, a new Democratic faction emerged within Congress, formed by the more conservative House Democrats, the new faction is known as the Blue Dog Coalition. The Blue Dogs represented the fiscally conservative Democrats, primarily from the southern states, originating from the Southern "Boll Weevil" Democrats. The Blue Dog Coalition added a socially conservative tone within the Democratic Party; due to their willingness to vote with Republicans on gun rights and social issues. Blue Dogs sometimes dubbed as issue based factions from their different views on social issues, such as "pro-life Democrats."<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Sean Trende, *The Lost Majority: Why the Future of Government is Up for Grabs - and Who Will Take it* (Macmillan Press, 2012), 56.

<sup>102</sup> Cal Thomas and Bob Beckel, *Common Ground How to Stop the Partisan War That Is Destroying America* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007), 35.

<sup>103</sup> Bob Benenson and David Tarr, *Elections A to Z*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2012), 32-35, accessed August 5, 2013, [http://library.cqpress.com/elections/elaz4d\\_32.2](http://library.cqpress.com/elections/elaz4d_32.2).

Shortly after the Blue Dogs emerged, a second group formed, in 1997- when three Democratic representatives institutionalized the DLC within the party by forming the New Democrat Coalition (NDC). The New Democrats philosophy included a harder stance on defense, a moderate stance on fiscal issues, while incorporating innovative alternatives on the traditional Democratic principles. Compared to the mainstream Democratic principles, the NDC advocated a different view on the role government should play in society, and pushed for greater states power.<sup>104</sup> “New Dems” place to the right center of the party on fiscal issues, while to the left on social issues.

The formation of the NDC was as a way for Congressional Democrats to join forces with the White House, with their members representing some of Clinton’s strongest allies in Congress. The belief was the coalition would create a large enough voting bloc to override the liberal wing of the party so Clinton could finish passing his agenda. Compared to the moderate Blue Dogs, the New Democrats were less willing to oppose the White House and more liberal on social issues. Table 2.3 outlines the principles of the three factions based on the caucus’s principles. This table shows that the moderate Democrats are fiscal conservatives, pro-business Democrats, and share different views on social issues, these caucuses represent the middle of the conservative and liberal spectrum in the Democratic Party and the moderate voice between the two parties. At this time, the moderates in the caucus (Blue Dogs and the New Democrats) constituted the majority of the House Democrats.

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<sup>104</sup> Eliza Newlin Carney, "A New Coalition for New Democrats," *National Journal* 28, no. 48 (November 30, 1996), accessed August 6, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/200284631?accountid=11752>. Also, Jim McTague, "D.C. Current: Divisions in both Parties Stand in the Way of Clinton's Agenda, GOP Tax Strategy," *Barron's* 79, no. 4 (January 25, 1999): 51, accessed August 6, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/201084199?accountid=11752>.



<b>Table 2.3: Democratic Factions Based on Ideology</b>			
	<b>Traditional Democrat</b>	<b>New Democrats</b>	<b>Blue Dog Coalition</b>
<b>Economic Policies</b>	Progressive	Pro-Business Pro-Free Trade	Pro-Business Free Market
<b>Social Issue</b>	Liberal	Liberal	Conservative
<b>Role of Government</b>	Big Government Government is the Solution	Fiscally Responsible, Efficient Government	Small, Fiscally Responsible Government

### *Minority Status*

Due to the party's minority status in Congress, the Democrats held little to no influence in setting the political agenda. As newly elected Texas Democrat Martin Frost put it, "There's now recognition among liberal Members in the Caucus that we won't get back to the majority without including the moderates and conservatives."<sup>105</sup> Despite this call for Democratic unity, the party failed to win back either House while Clinton was in office. The next six years the Democratic Party was in retreat as the Republican Party dominated all aspects of national politics. The party elected officials had to learn how to legislate in the minority status, while they have done this before, this time it was different. Faced as the minority, under a unified Republican Party, that needed little to no Democratic support to pass their legislative agenda and without a president or party

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<sup>105</sup> Ethan Wallison, "Liberal House Democrats Learn to Work with Moderates with Visions of Taking Back the Majority, both Segments of the Caucus Realize they Need One another," *Roll Call*, Jan 18, 1999, accessed September 3, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/326656679?accountid=11752>. See Also, John Harwood, "Democratic Centrists Mend Fences with Party's Liberals," *Wall Street Journal*, July 16, 2001, accessed September 3, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/398839557?accountid=11752>.

spokesperson; there was no one to manage the divide between the moderate and the liberal elites in the party.

## **V. The Rise of the Moderate Democrats**

After sitting in the minority for twelve years, the Democratic Party saw President Bush's approval rating drop after his second term election; the Democrats saw this as an opportunity to regain power. In an effort to regain the House, then Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chair, Rahm Emanuel, began targeting moderate Republican seats, believing these representatives would be the future of the party and with their help; the party could capture the presidency in 2008. However, he warned if the strategy proved successful, the liberal wing of the party must be careful not to dominate the agenda.<sup>106</sup>

The modern Democratic Party emerged after the 2006 Congressional elections gave the Democrats the majority in both Chambers. After twelve years in the House minority, the party picked up 31 seats, which shifted the party to majority status. Continuing on this trend, the 2008 election gave the party a more comfortable majority advantage by picking up 21 more Republican seats. The two elections contributed to a 52 seat net gain for the Democratic Party in Congress.

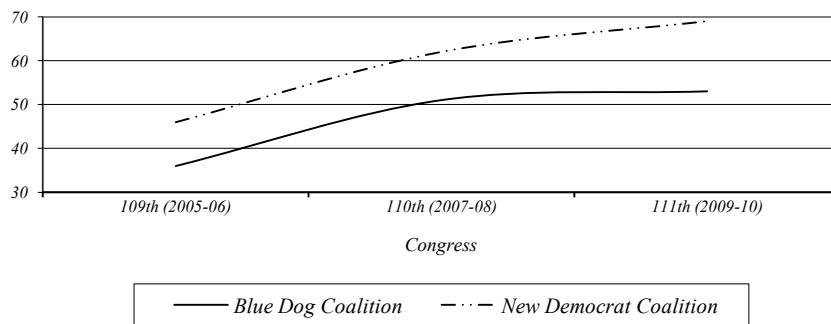
The party's national comeback was from Republican voters who were dissatisfied with the party and resided in moderate, swing districts. In fact, of the party's 52-seat gain 43 of these wins came from Congressional districts that voted for Bush in both 2004, and

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<sup>106</sup> Tim Reid, "Meet the Blue Dogs: Pro-Gun, Anti-Abortion -and Democrat," *The Times*, November 9, 2006, accessed September 19, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/319643926?accountid=45336>.

41 districts that supported Bush in the 2000 election. The same trends explain the Senate's 14-seat gain, where nine of the 14 seats came from states that supported Bush in 2004. The 2006 election was the first time since the 1992 election that the number of moderates increased in both the House and the Senate.<sup>107</sup> The new Democratic electorate influenced the moderate caucuses' growth, which increased the representational share of moderates in the Democratic Party. Table 2.4 shows the caucuses' growth from the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress to the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress.

**Figure 2.4 Moderate Caucus Membership in the U.S. House, 2005-2010**



After the Democrats made large gains in the House and Senate in 2006, they continued on this trend, capturing the White House in 2008. The 2008 Presidential election of Barack Obama returned the White House to the Democratic Party after eight

<sup>107</sup> Alan K. Ota, "Pelosi Trip Begins in Center Lane," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* 64, no. 43 (November 13, 2006): 2977-81, accessed September 5, 2013, <http://search.proquest.com.proxy1.library.jhu.edu/docview/204080511?accountid=11752>.

years of Republican rule. Obama received more votes than any presidential candidate had ever received before, winning 53 percent of the national popular vote. Obama's election broke new grounds for the Democratic Party by winning Indiana, Virginia, and North Carolina - victories the Democrats have not seen since 1964 and 1976.

The 2008 election showed that the Democrats built a coalition across a wide and expanded share of the electorate - young voters, Hispanics and other ethnic minorities, white voters, and suburbanites. Along with a new category of voters that were captured from the Republican Party- which explain the seats gained by Congressional Democrats in 2006 and 2008. The seats that the Democrats captured from the Republicans eroded the Republican's base and attributed to the Democrats electoral gains of rural voters, suburban voters, and the white working-middle class.

### *The Voice of Moderation*

After the Democrats made large gains in the House and Senate in 2006 and 2008, then captured the White House in 2008, the era of divided government finally ended. For the next two years, President Obama and the Democratic-controlled Congress quickly began working on their party's agenda, which encompassed passing an economic stimulus package, comprehensive health care legislation, and financial regulatory reforms through both chambers, while the House Democrats also passed the infamous "cap and trade" proposal. The Republican Party stood united with almost every House Republican voting in opposition to these measures; however, with the Democrats holding the simple majority in the House, Republican unanimous opposition is irrelevant.

While there are, some issues the moderate Democrats vocalized their concerns, such as abortion during the healthcare debate, when roughly forty Democrat members of the House insisted they would not support health care unless guaranteed that no taxpayer money would go towards funding abortions. Seeking to avoid this situation, Michigan Congressman Bart Stupak introduced an amendment, which would restrict public funds to pay for abortions. On November 9, 2009, it passed the House with the support of 64 Democrats. However, the final bill did not include the House amendment, in an effort to garner support; President Obama issued an Executive Order to guarantee Stupak's Amendment, which proved enough commitment for 44 of the 64 original supporters to vote in favor of the final Healthcare bill.<sup>108</sup> Another example when moderate Democrats flexed their political muscle was during the "cap and trade." Moderate Democrats voiced concerns over a cap on carbon emissions and the potential harmful effects it could have on their state's economy. In efforts to pass the legislation, the Chairmen included provisions that would ease in the emission caps for those it would hit.<sup>109</sup>

Surprisingly, with the party's influx of moderate and conservative members, these reforms passed with some of their help. Despite the caucus membership, the party voted on a unified front. In fact, according to Congressional Quarterly's Annual Party Unity studies, Blue Dogs voted with their party 89 percent of the time, compared to the total party record of 91. With more than half of the House Democrats voting with their party at

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<sup>108</sup> Lori Montgomery and Shailagh Murray, "In Deal with Stupak, White House Announces Executive Order on Abortion," *The Washington Post*, March 21, 2010, accessed August 27, 2013, <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2010/03/white-house-announces-executiv.html?wprss=44>.

<sup>109</sup> "Democrats Prevail on Top Issues, Struggle to Keep Troops in Line." In *CQ Almanac 2009*, 65th ed., edited by Jan Austin, C-1-C-12. (Washington, DC: CQ-Roll Call Group, 2010), accessed September 10, 2013, <http://library.cqpress.com/cqalmanac/cqal09-1183-59527-2250710>.

least 98 percent in 2009, Speaker Pelosi could count on 125 votes on almost every issue.<sup>110</sup> As moderate, Blue Dog Democrat Allen Boyd said, “At some point in time, you have to put your personal agenda and ambitions aside for the good of the country and certainly for the party.”<sup>111</sup>

By the 2010-midterm elections, the previous electoral surges that were favoring the Democratic Party in 2006 and 2008 vanished as the party lost 63 seats in the House of Representatives, only holding onto 13 seats that the party picked up the previous two election cycles. The moderate caucuses’ memberships dropped from 53 Blue Dogs and 72 New Democrats to 26 Blue Dogs and 47 New Democrats the following Congress. The moderate faction in the Democratic Party made up the midterm election losses.

## **VI. Moderate Faction Vacates the Party**

The moderates in the Democratic Party had several factors playing against them in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress. First, these members lacked seniority and therefore held no leadership seats. Another factor against the moderates is they wing is factionalized and offer no concrete ideology. Of the 129 Democrats belonging to the moderate Caucuses, 18 members were part of both groups, which shows these members are sitting between the moderate wings.

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<sup>110</sup> CQ 2009 Vote Studies: Party Unity, “An Ever Wider Line Between Parties” *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, accessed October 10, 2013, [http://library.cqpress.com/cqalmanac/file.php?path=Party%20Unity%20Tables/2009\\_Party\\_Unity.pdf&PHPSESSID=0qr0kn2j1gf2o0eanmd3o7l6q3](http://library.cqpress.com/cqalmanac/file.php?path=Party%20Unity%20Tables/2009_Party_Unity.pdf&PHPSESSID=0qr0kn2j1gf2o0eanmd3o7l6q3).

<sup>111</sup> Phillip Rucker, “Midterm Uproot Blue Dogs from Power and Cut Ranks in Half,” *The Washington Post*, November 19, 2010, accessed August 27, 2013, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/11/18/AR2010111806780.html>.

A third factor playing against the moderates is moderates represent the more fiscally conservative Democrats. As the Democrats electoral losses attributed to the party's handling of economic issues, these moderates failed to represent their constituents on the principles they ran on.<sup>112</sup> With moderates, failing to make any seat gains during the midterm elections the caucuses received no new membership.

Figure 2.5 represents the changes in caucus membership following the 2008, 2010, and 2012 election, while Figure 6 charts the decline of moderates based on Poole and Rosenthal's DW-Nominate scores. Figure 2.5 shows by the time of the 2012 election, the moderate caucuses reduced its membership from 76 Democrats belonging to a moderate caucus to 60 members. Figure 2.6 shows the moderates in the Democratic Party went from 27 percent of the party's makeup in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, to less than 12 percent of the party's makeup in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress. The 23 members that represent the 12 percent of the Democratic Party all belong to at least one of the moderate caucuses. However, following redistricting only 13 of Poole and Rosenthal's moderates are still serving in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress.

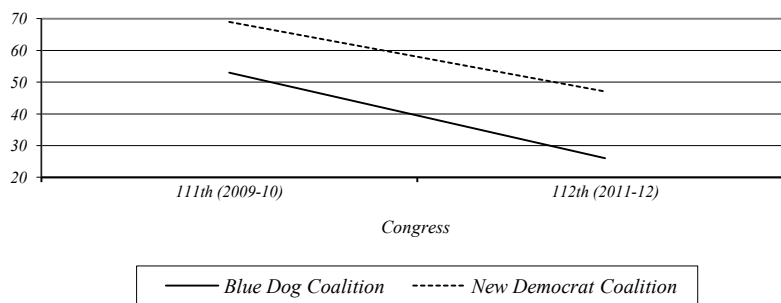
Nevertheless, two important factors contributed to the Democrats losing their moderate representatives. The first factor is moderates have no media outlet, which diminishes their voices as the right and left wing media has grown. The other is the lack of a political center to hold onto. As the percentage of moderates in both parties has shrunk, the moderates still in office are part of the Democratic Party. As the moderates in the Republican Party have vanished drastically due to the Democrats gains in 2006 and

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<sup>112</sup> David R. Jones and Monkia L. McDermott, "The Salience of the Democratic Congress and the 2010 Election," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 44, no. 2 (April 2011): 297-301, accessed October 14, 2013, doi:10.1017/S1049096511000126.

2008, on top of outside forces that push the Republican Party to the right, the moderate Democrats have reacted to their loss. With no center to hold onto, these moderate Democrats find them in a House where they can yield no power. Senator Mary Landrieu explained her thoughts on being a moderate without moderate Republicans in office, “I can only be a centrist if there’s a center to hold on to.”<sup>113</sup>

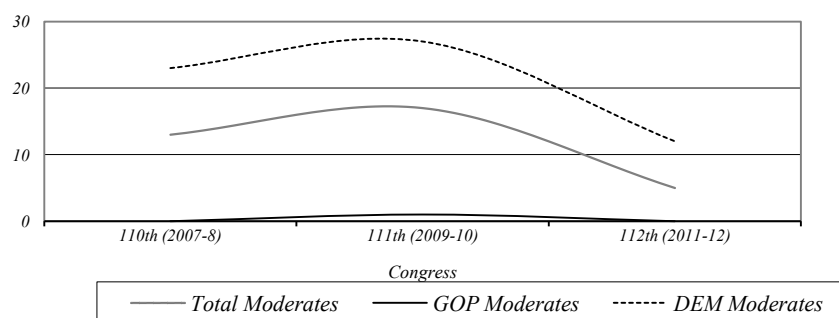
**Figure 2.5 Caucus Membership following 2010 House Elections**



<sup>113</sup> CQ 2009 Vote Studies: Party Unity, “An Ever Wider Line Between Parties,” B-13.



**Figure 2.6: Moderate Democrats based on DW-Nominate Scores  
110th-112th Congress**



## VII. Conclusion

The Democratic Party in the House of Representatives is indeed heterogeneous and the Southern and Moderate wing of the party is often in disagreement with the majority of the Democratic Party. Moderates have joined moderate caucuses such as the Blue Dog or New Democrat Coalition to differentiate them from the party as a whole. While the Blue Dog Coalition were seen as players that were more vocal over the New Democrats during legislative debates, most of these members also fell in the category of party moderates according to DW-Nominate scores.

Today moderates in the Democratic Party account for less than 12 percent of the party's membership and those remaining can be expected to decline further. It is important to remember that these members occupy uncertainty, representing districts that could turn against them at any election. While numerous factors contributed to the loss of moderate Democrats, such as the factional divides within the moderate wings, redistricting, and the loss of swing districts, the loss of moderate Republicans has

transformed the role that moderates play in Congress. No longer holding their kingmakers status, as the pivotal players in-between the two parties, but remembered as today's gridlock and polarization in Congress.

## CHAPTER 3

### *The Role of Factions*

#### **I. Introduction**

This thesis shows that factions are extremely important in today's political parties. The loosely defined Tea Party Movement has helped the Republican Party restore their message, to fiscal responsibility, while the Moderate Democrats helped the Democrats gained a majority. However, there is still insight needed on the overall understanding of party factions. As the previous chapters have focused on two current factions within the two parties, this chapter seeks to elaborate on this and look at the role factions play in congress and investigate on how this role has changed throughout time. More specifically, this chapter will answer the questions, what are factions? What causes factions? What role do factions play? What are the fates of factions?

Therefore, this chapter begins with an overview of the academic literature on factions. It then goes to explain the difficulties scholars face when identifying and measuring factions. Following this brief literature review, it finds that factions are identified based on popular issues, and outlines the current factions within both parties. It then uses the vote for party leadership to identify and explain the current role of congressional factions. It then compares the Tea Party faction to the Democrat's moderate faction, by analyzing the rise and decline of these two factions in Congress since President Obama. It concludes that throughout time, different factions come and go, holding onto power at different times. Each faction plays an important role in the party from challenging party leadership, to gaining or retaining party voters, or bringing an unlikely group of people together. What is similar with both the current congressional

parties is that factions will continue to come and go, as the party's voters continue to change.

## II. The Current Factional Makeup

According to the *New York Times*, there are five prominent groups in the Democratic Party. The article describes the two largest groups as the Staunch Liberals, the parties' most loyal voters, and the Blue Collar Bloc. The third group they refer to as the Bootstrap Optimists, representing the majority-minority bloc, who are the more religious and socially conservative members of the party. While the last two blocs are the young independents and the southern and rural Democrats, these members represent the religious and socially conservative, who are open to voting for a Republican.

Table 3.1 lays out this analysis better by showing the group they identified and the issues these factions formed. This data was collected from Pew Research Center's Political Typology as well as the views of political experts; and is based on a liberal conservative scale of voters.<sup>114</sup>

**Table 3.1 Democratic Factions and Issues**

<u>Democratic Groups</u>	<u>Issues</u>
<b>Staunch Liberals</b>	Inequality, abortion rights, cut defense spending
<b>Blue Collar Bloc</b>	The economy, expand safety net, anti-corporate welfare
<b>Bootstrap Optimist</b>	The economy, protect safety net, pro-immigration
<b>Younger Independents</b>	Pro-abortion rights, pro-gay marriage, pro-immigrants
<b>Southern and Rural</b>	The economy, pro-defense funding

<sup>114</sup> Bill Marsh, Graham Roberts, Xaquín G.V. and Archie TSE, "A New Guide to the Democratic Herd," *The New York Times*, August 30, 2012, accessed May 13, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/09/02/sunday-review/a-new-guide-to-the-democratic-herd.html?ref=sunday-review&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/09/02/sunday-review/a-new-guide-to-the-democratic-herd.html?ref=sunday-review&_r=0).

A similar article looks at the Republican Party and offers six factional groupings. The first they mention is the largest bloc, the establishment wing of the party, most open to compromise as the Main Street Voters. The second group is the Tea Party Voters, the populist voice of the party, who they describe as “conservatives first, Republicans second.” The wings then begin to get smaller, the Christian Conservatives, the Libertarians, and the disaffected, which they describe as the least loyal to the party. The final bloc is known as the smallest bloc, the vanishing moderates, which are the neoconservatives, their constituency has largest disappeared since 2006.<sup>115</sup>

Table 3.2 lays out the Republican Party’s factions based on issues, using the same format and analysis from table 3.1.

**Table 3.2 Republican Factions and Issues**

<u>Republican Groups</u>	<u>Issues</u>
<b>Main Street Voters</b>	The economy, cut deficit, taxes, regulation, repeal Obamacare, gun owners’ rights, anti-abortion,
<b>Tea Party Voters</b>	The economy, slash deficit, taxes, and regulations, repeal Obamacare
<b>Christian Conservatives</b>	The economy, anti-abortion, anti-gay marriage, Creationist theories
<b>Libertarians</b>	The economy, slash deficit, taxes and regulations
<b>The Disaffected</b>	The economy, Wall Street great, anti-immigration, pro-safety net
<b>The Endangered or Vanished</b>	National Security voters

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<sup>115</sup> Bill Marsh, Graham Roberts, Xaquín G.V. and Archie TSE, “A New Guide to the Republican Herd,” *The New York Times*, August 26, 2012, accessed May 13, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/08/26/sunday-review/a-new-guide-to-the-republican-herd.html?ref=sunday-review>.

While this analysis is very broad, it leaves many questions to be answered. What are factions? How can we identify factions? What role do factions play in Congress? The following section reviews the academic literature on the concept of party factions.

### **III. Factional Politics: Literature Review**

Upon drafting the United States Constitution, James Madison, one of the founding fathers of the United States, discussed the danger of “factions,” or outside groups of citizens, in the republic. In the *Federalist Paper*, No. 10, Madison addressed the question of how to guard against “factions,” with interests contrary to interests of the whole community. Madison stated:

By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community...<sup>116</sup>

Madison’s definition of factions is simply an outside group of citizens, regardless of size, that share a common interest. While Madison gave a broad understanding of factions, there is still much more understanding needed on the subject of factions.

Factions are a relatively understudied topic in American Political Science. While our founding fathers were aware of factions, scholars began focusing on factions -within political parties- in the late 1940’s. Political scientist V. O. Key was one of the first to study factions within American politics. Key believed by analyzing party primaries votes one could identify factions, of which he defined as “a combination, clique or grouping of

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<sup>116</sup> James Madison, “Federalist Paper No. 10.”

voters and political leaders who unite at a particular time in support of a candidate.”<sup>117</sup>

Like Madison, Key saw factions, as outside interest, however Key believed factions encompassed a political leader and only worked to support a candidate. Key’s work opened the door for future scholars to expand the knowledge on party politics and factional groups in America.

In 1960, Raphael Zariski furthered Key’s definition of factions to “any intra-party combination, clique, or grouping whose members share a sense of common identity and common purpose and are organized to act collectively-as a distinct bloc within the party-to achieve their goals.” The critical component to Zariski’s definition is that members share an identity and purpose, while acting as a distinct bloc. According to Zariski’s study, the goals of factions vary from patronage, to party control, to the fulfillment of a particular interest or goal.<sup>118</sup> Zariski explained that factions exist for both positive and negative reasons.

Factions may be said to exist when the party member is aware of certain fundamental differences which divide him from other members of the party, and is also aware that he and other like-minded party members have certain characteristics, interests, and aspirations in common and are engaged in a collective effort to overcome resistance within the party to those interests and aspirations.<sup>119</sup>

Scholars Belloni and Beller published the next major breakthrough on factionalism almost twenty years later. During the initial research for their book, *Faction*

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<sup>117</sup> V. O. Key, *Southern Politics In State and Nation* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1949), 16.

<sup>118</sup> Raphael Zariski, “Party Factions and Comparative Politics: Some Preliminary Observations,” *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 4, no. 1 (February 1960): 27-51, accessed June 10, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2108754>.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

*Politics: Political Parties and Factionalism in Comparative Perspective*, these two scholars organized some of the academic literature on party factions from the past thirty years. At this time, their study concluded that the knowledge on factionalism was limited in scope, only focused on a particular country and their political circumstances and due to this limited base of knowledge, scholars lacked a concrete definition for factions.<sup>120</sup> Furthermore, their survey of literature concluded to better study party factions scholars should adopt the methods used to analyze political parties. Therefore, in their book they studied factionalism in fifteen different countries, and concluded that factions are

Any relatively organized group that exists within the context of some other group and which (as a political faction) competes with rivals for power advantages within the larger group of which it is a part<sup>121</sup>

In addition to offering a universal definition, these two scholars provided three components for scholars to answer that would help identify factions and provide for a general examination of a faction. This examination revolves around three sets of questions. The first group questions the structure of the faction- i.e. the faction organizational development- this component they subdivided into formalization, completeness, and durability of faction structure. The second group of questions focus on the functional components of factions, this analysis addresses the relations and causes of factions. While their final group of questions raises some broader, more casual questions from previous studies. While the study of factions is greatly under studied, Beller and

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<sup>120</sup> Frank P. Belloni and Dennis C. Beller, "The Study of Party Factions as Competitive Political Organizations," *Western Political Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (December 1976): 531-49, accessed May 5, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/448136>.

<sup>121</sup> Frank P. Belloni and Dennis C. Beller, *Faction Politics: Political Parties and Factionalism in Comparative Perspective* (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 1978), 419.



Bellini found that factions are a predominant feature in the political arena and of considerable importance.

Following Belloni and Beller's work, the academic literature on factionalism somewhat went flat, with only a handful of scholars attempting to study factions. Howard Reiter is one of the more popular scholars to do so. In 2004, Reiter studied the factional makeup of the current Democratic and Republican parties- in the context of the 2004 presidential campaign. Reiter used Belloni and Beller's definition of factions, because he felt it was "not overly vague or precise," and identified party factions by examining the party institutions they provide the best picture of the real battle between the parties. Reiter saw that the contemporary party factionalism can be both a positive or negative force within the parties, Reiter writes that factions "provide a relatively harmless way of letting off steam, or it can divide the party into warring contenders who have lost sight of collective goals."<sup>122</sup>

More recently, two scholars have examined the factional makeup of Congress. The first is from Lucas DeWayne and Iva Ellen Deutchman, their work focuses on the role factions played in Congress, by taking the definition provided by Susan Hammond that defines factions as "voluntary, organized associations of members of Congress, without recognition in chamber rules or line-item appropriations and that seek to play a role in the policy process." They then analyze the voting records in the House of Representatives from 1994 to 2002 to the representative's caucus membership to identify distinct patterns of voting. Their work found that factions help explain the behavior of

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<sup>122</sup> Howard L. Reiter, "Factional Persistence within Parties in the United States," *Party Politics* 10, no. 3 (May 2004): 253, accessed June 13, 2013, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/135406880402458>.

House members, and that members who are part of moderate caucus were less likely to vote on party line, while members from more extreme caucuses were more likely to vote on party line. Therefore, the role that factions play in Congress is to “allow like minded colleagues to come together and vote on common issues, at times against direction of their party.”<sup>123</sup>

The other work that studied factions within Congress is from political scientist Daniel DiSalvo. DiSalvo analyzed different strategies that factional groups in Congress adopt, and based off these actions, the implications factions have on the balance of power and changes of resources within the institution. DiSalvo defines factions as “a party sub-unit that has enough ideological consistency, organizational capacity, and temporal durability to influence policy making, the party’s image, and the congressional balance of power,” and finds that factions should not be viewed negatively, they are important features that help shape a party’s decision-making, strategy, and reputation within Congress.

DiSalvo work identifies nine factions within the two major parties, concluding that there were four options for factional group: to centralize or decentralize power, formally or informally. DiSalvo’s work also indicated that factions can be notable from caucuses, coalitions, pressure groups, and along with forces outside of the parties.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Lucas DeWayne and Iva Ellen Deutchman, “Five Factions, Two Parties: Caucus Membership in the House of Representatives, 1994-2002,” *Congress & the Presidency: a Journal of Capital Studies* 36: 1 (Spring 2009): 58-79, accessed June 5, 2013, [http:// dx.doi.org/10.1080/07343460802683166](http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07343460802683166).

<sup>124</sup> Daniel DiSalvo, “The Politics of a Party Faction: The Liberal-Labor Alliance in the Democratic Party, 1948-1972,” *Journal of Policy History* 22, no 3 (2010): 271, accessed April 17, 2015, doi:1017/S0898030610000114.

Table 3.3 outlines the nine factions identified by DiSalvo by identifying the years they were active and the larger party they identified with.<sup>125</sup>

**Table 3.3 DiSalvo's Nine Factions**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Party</b>
1896-1916	Old-Guard- Conservative Republicans	Republican Party
1904-1928	Progressive Republicans	Republican Party
1896-1924	Populist Democrats	Democratic Party
1938-1976	Southern Democrats	Democratic Party
1938-1968	Liberal Republicans	Republican Party
1958-1976	Liberal-Labor Democrats	Democratic Party
1966-1980	New Politics Democrats	Democratic Party
1964-1996	New Right Republicans	Republican Party
1986-2007	New Democrats	Democratic Party

The contemporary scholars face the same issues that early scholars once faced, a lack of consensus on the definition of factions and a lack of method that would identify these factions. For example, scholars on one side of the argument say in order to be a faction, there must be some form of organization, while the other side says they are highly disorganized.

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<sup>125</sup> Daniel DiSalvo, "Party Factions in Congress," *Congress & the Presidency: a Journal of Capital Studies* 36: 1 (Spring 2009): 27-57, accessed June 5, 2013, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07343460802683125>.

So, what exactly is a faction? Madison's belief wasn't that simple, he saw factions as majority or minority of a whole, united by a common passion, adversed to the rights of other citizens. Contemporary scholars have elaborated on Madison's view, classifying factions as groups of voters or citizens that compete with a rival for power. Today, with outside groups representing themselves as the "religious right" or the "libertarian wing" as factions within the Republican Party, this implies that factions are a loose group of ideology within a party. While some pundits identify the "northern liberals" or the "southern conservatives" as factions within the Democratic Party, and some pundits even refer to factions as "pro-life Democrats" or "fiscal conservative Democrats." Therefore, factional grouping represent a form of tension within a party. Factions can form based on ideology, geography, or issue based disputes, and can form in all levels of the party, from party activist, to party members, to voters. This paper finds that Madison's definition of faction still applies; factions are a group of citizens that represent either the majority or minority of a whole, united under a shared passion.

As this research has indicated factions have dated back to the formation of parties, while this paper does not seek to focus on the early parties, it does indicate that factions, are outside interest, and have come and gone throughout time in both political parties. The follow section looks at the current factional makeup of the Democratic and Republican Party, by doing this we can better understand the rise and fall of factional politics.

#### **IV. Identifying Factions**

As scholars have struggles with ways to identify faction, they have found one similar characteristic that faction share, all factions form around a shared issue. Therefore, this paper does not find a way to accurately measure and identify all the current party factions, but it does shed light on party factions, by providing a way to identify factions exist within each party.

This paper uses the approach commonly used by scholars that identify factions in presidential elections. Howard Reiter's work looked at the party's nominee on presidential election to determine party factions; therefore, with this papers focus on Congressional parties, the vote for party leadership would show a similar measurement.<sup>126</sup>

## ***V. Congressional Factions***

### *Democratic Caucus*

In the 110<sup>th</sup> and 111<sup>th</sup> Congresses, both parties received no formal objection to the election of House Speaker, Nancy Pelosi and Minority Leader, John Boehner received unified supported for their position to House Leadership.<sup>127</sup> However, as the 2010 congressional election shifted the power of the House to the Republicans, the Democratic caucus found conflict in who should represent their party. Nineteen members of their caucus voted for one of the seven challengers to former Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

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<sup>126</sup> Howard L. Reiter, "Party Factions in 2004," in *The States of the Parties: The Changing Role of Contemporary American Parties*, ed. John C. Green and Daniel J. Coffey, 5<sup>th</sup> edition.(Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007).

<sup>127</sup> Election of the Speaker, Office of the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives. January 4, 2007, accessed May 18, 2015. <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2007/roll002.xml>. Election of the Speaker, Office of the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives. January 6, 2009, accessed May 18, 2015, <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2009/roll002.xml>.

Congressman Heath Shuler, a vocal Blue Dog Democrat from North Carolina, received eleven nominations from his caucus.<sup>128</sup> The following two Congresses the Democratic caucus continued to offer five nominees, however, the majority support remaining with Minority Leader Pelosi.<sup>129</sup>

### *Republican Caucus*

The Republican Party's gain in the 2008 election, welcomed clear support for former Minority Leader John Boehner to the role of House Speaker. However, following the next election cycle, the House Republicans began to find a similar conflict within their caucus as the party had seven nominations for the role of Speaker. However, the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress showed the most concerning results for the Republican Party. The 2014 congressional elections resulted in a higher percentage of Republicans in the House, picking up thirteen seats. However, Speaker Boehner, representing the majority of the Republican caucus, faced ten formal challengers.<sup>130</sup>

As many scholars have pointed out factions do exist, because of the broad term factions can be identified generally, or they can work as a concrete voting bloc and work under a formal group. While the data does not analyze each contender as an individual faction, it serves to represent the overall notion that party factions exist. Today's

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<sup>128</sup> Election of the Speaker, Office of the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives. January 5, 2011, accessed May 18, 2015. <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2011/roll002.xml#Cooper>.

<sup>129</sup> Election of the Speaker, Office of the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives. January 3 2013, accessed May 18, 2015. <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2013/roll002.xml>.

<sup>130</sup> Election of the Speaker, Office of the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives. January 6, 2015, accessed May 18, 2015. <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2015/roll002.xml>.

congressional party organizations have several factions, however, they have the same goal, in their attempt to capture the party's power they confront each other in conflict.

By identifying factions through the vote for party leadership, it proves the point made by scholar Prasanta Sen Gupta. In his 1970 article, *Intra-Party Politics*, Sen Gupta wrote

Factionalism may thus be conceptualized as the conflict or competition between two or more factions within the same party organization, the prime motive being winning the power struggle.<sup>131</sup>

As scholars argue, all factions are different; they organize, operate, and function differently within their party. This paper seeks to elaborate on the role of factions in the contemporary U.S. House of Representatives, investigating the role that the contemporary parties handle their party factions. The following section explains the intra-party conflict between the moderate Democrats' faction and the Tea Party Republican faction.

## **VI. Intra-party Politics**

### *The Democratic Party and its Blue Dogs*

The Democrats Blue Dogs faction is loosely a term to describe the parties more conservative or southern members in the party. The Blue Dogs have had a more formal role in Congress, organizing within the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC) and forming the Blue Dog Coalition. The formation of the coalition followed the Republican sweep in the 1994 midterm election, when the ranks of the moderate and conservatives

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<sup>131</sup> Prasanta Sen Gupta, "Intra-Party Politics: A Preliminary Note," *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 40, no. 1 (March 1979): 83, accessed May 18, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41854893>.

Democrats decimated leaving a higher percentage of liberals among the Democrats in Congress.<sup>132</sup>

There has been two periods where the moderate factions have demonstrated most influence in recent years. The first was mediating between the Republican Party, who held the majority for the first time in nearly forty years and the Clinton Administration. The second was when the Democrats recaptured the Majority in 2006 and the moderate faction grew to appease the newly captured conservative to moderate congressional seats.

### *Blue Dog Growth*

On the eve of the 1994 Congressional election, the Democrats controlled the majority in the House, the prior election left a clear Democratic majority of 258 representatives. The party was reigning nearly 40 years in the majority, and dominated all the regions in the country. However, once the election results came in, the Democrats lost fifty-four seats and shifted its ranks to the minority.

The 1992 and 1994 national election results show the most significant lose for the party was from southern states, losing twenty-one seats out from the region. Table 3.4 summarizes these changes based on the House general election votes from 1992 to 1994.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> For Information on Blue Dogs and Moderates, see Chapter 2.

<sup>133</sup> "House General Elections, All States, 1992 Summary." In *CQ Voting and Elections Collection* (Web site) Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2003. <http://library.cqpress.com/elections/avg1992-3us1>. Regions analyzed as follow: South (13): AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, Midwest (12) IL, IN, IO, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WS, Northeast (12) CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, WV, West (13) AK, AZ, CA, CO, HA, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY.



<b>Table 3.4</b>			
<b>Democratic Party Election Results</b>			
<b>Region</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>Seat Change</b>
<b>South</b>	85	64	21
<b>Midwest</b>	61	46	15
<b>Northeast</b>	57	54	3
<b>West</b>	55	40	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>54</b>

While it is unfair to base the Blue Dog on their region, they formed to represent the moderate to conservative voice in the Democratic Party. According to the 1972-2008 American Election Studies reports, the Democrats who identified themselves as liberals in the 1992 election went from 77% to 84% in the 1996. While the Democratic conservatives jumped from 34% in 1990 to 25% in 1996.<sup>134</sup> Chapter two's data correlates while the party's voters were losing their conservative members, the Blue Dog Coalition in congress continued to grow. This signifies that the Blue Dog Coalition served as a voice to the conservative votes that the party was losing.

#### *Republican Party and Its Tea Party*

The Tea Party faction formed very loosely in 2009, gaining momentum through various media outlets, websites, and protest across the country. Republican based, attacking the Obama Administration, and echoing the message of fiscal responsibility. As

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<sup>134</sup> Party Identification 3-Point Scale (revised in 2008) 1952-2008," Retrieved from [http://electionstudies.org/nsguide/text/t2a\\_2\\_1.txt](http://electionstudies.org/nsguide/text/t2a_2_1.txt), *The ANES Guide to Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Center for Political Studies (accessed May 21, 2015).

House Republicans were seen not holding up the parties' conservative values, leaving many members worried about their 2010 congressional election.

The Tea Party faction formalized within the House of Representatives in July of 2010, when Representative Michelle Bachmann introduced the Tea Party Caucus. Republican members quickly jumped onto the Tea Party bandwagon. In the summer of 2010, fifty-five House Republicans identified themselves as Tea Party Caucus members. Four months later, during the 2010 elections, the Republican gained eighty-four new conservative members in the House of Representatives, which scholars heavily credited to the Tea Party Movement.<sup>135</sup> Unlike the Blue Dog Caucus, the Tea Party Caucus quickly dissolved, however, media continued to recognize the intra-party battles between the party regulars and the Tea Party faction.

### *Tea Party Growth*

The Tea Party faction is harder to measure than the Democrats moderate faction, due to the group's shorter longevity, the less formal role as a congressional caucus, and the outside influence that pressures the Republican Party's conservative members. Media reports claim the caucus fell by the time the 2012 election and lacked the support in 2013 when Bachmann tried to reboot it. The important factor to note about the Tea Party faction is that the caucus formally ended upon the departure of founder Michelle

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<sup>135</sup> For information on the Republican Party and the Tea Party Faction, see Chapter 1.

Bachmann in the 2014 election. Currently, a new chair is working to revamp on the caucus but has less than positive feedback.<sup>136</sup>

*What is the fate of factions?*

Since the previous two chapters were written there has been substantial changes within the Republican and Democratic Party in congress. The 2014 House elections turned 16 Democratic seats to Republican seats, and 3 republican seats shifted to Democratic seats, while these changes sound minor, the fate of the Tea Party faction and Blue Dog faction has drastically changed.<sup>137</sup>

A poll taken in September of 2014 showed that only 24 percent of Americans identified themselves as a supporter of the Tea Party Movement, with only 52 percent of the Republican Party identifying as a Tea Party Supporter.<sup>138</sup> Within Congress, the Tea Party Caucus ranks have been decimated, however, the results of the Tea Party Movement has changed the Republican Party. According to Harvard professor Theda Skocpol, the Tea Party forces has pushed the party future right, she says infact,

Popularity in national polls and a majority of election wins do not matter as long as Tea Party pincers keep a stranglehold on GOP leaders and legislative agendas. As of the summer of 2014, they are doing just fine at

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<sup>136</sup> Billy House, "Michele Bachmann is Gone but the Tea Party Caucus Lives On," *Bloomberg Politics*, January 14, 2015, accessed May 22, 2015, <http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2015-01-14/michele-bachmann-is-gone-but-the-tea-party-caucus-lives-on>.

<sup>137</sup> R. Cook, "Election 2014: Party switches in the House," Retrieved from *CQ Press Library*, 2015, <http://library.cqpress.com/elections/rcookltr-1527-95472-2665875>.

<sup>138</sup> Gallup Organization, *Gallup Poll*, September 2014, "Do you consider yourself a supporter of the Tea Party movement or an opponent of the Tea Party Movement," USGALLUP: 201411.Q22. Gallup Organization. Storrs, CT: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, iPoll (accessed May 22, 2015.)

that – and almost certainly will continue to do so for some time to come.<sup>139</sup>

However, running on the Tea Party name is not as favorable as it once was. Tea Party favorite, Sarah Palin endorsed 15 congressional candidates, with only four winning their primaries, running on the Tea Party name no longer runs the results it once did in 2012.<sup>140</sup> The conclusion is the Tea Party has captured the Republican Party's mainstream, however, running on the Tea Party name is no longer profitable, therefore, members in Congress no longer feel the need to organize as Tea Party Republicans. The Tea Party is no different from other factional groupings, once the party accepts so much of a faction's agenda, they become absorbed into the party's majority.

And, what exactly has become of the moderates Democrats in Congress? According to Alan Ota, writer of *Congressional Quarterly*, the Blue Dogs have lost more than a third of its members at the end of 2014 through retirements and election losses, blaming this on the turn of the Southern voters.<sup>141</sup> The real question is what role do these members play with only a small number of members and a Republican controlled House? The answer is when the Republicans split, and need votes to pass their bills, leadership will come to count on these members to pass legislation.

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<sup>139</sup> Theda Skocpol, "Tea Party Forces Still Control the Republican Agenda," *Scholars Strategy Network*, accessed May 22, 2015, <http://www.scholarsstrategynetwork.org/page/tea-party-forces-still-control-republican-agenda>.

<sup>140</sup> Sean Cockerham, "Palin goes 0 for 2 in Alaska as clout disappears nationally," *McClatchyDC*, August, 20, 2014, accessed May 22, 2015, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/08/20/237095/palin-goes-0-for-2-in-alaska-as.html>.

<sup>141</sup> Alan K. Ota, "Blue Dogs Hang Tight," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* (December 8, 2014): 1438, accessed May 22, 2015, <http://library.cqpress.com/cqweekly/weeklyreport113000004584205>.

## **VI. The Shifting Power of Factions**

*What causes factions?* Today's party factions form when one party's majority faction has a stronger voice within the party. Congressional parties react to their outside environments and factions serve as a tool for voters to express their concerns. As the Blue Dog faction helped the Democrats in 2006, and the Tea Party faction helped the Republicans in 2008.

*What role do factions play?* Within House Chambers, factions overall role is to challenge party leadership, to making small legislative changes to stopping floor action. However, the roles of factions are all different. When a party is in the majority, factions serve as a voice to appease voters, a way for the party to gain seats, or a vehicle that serves to grow constituent outreach. However, depending on the stance of the faction, when a party is in the minority, a faction can serve as a way to mediate between the two parties, as the Blue Dogs did in the early 1990s.

*What is the fate of factions?* There are two ways to look at the fate of factions, based on their formation. Loosely formed factions, like the Tea Party, are more likely to change as their voters shift. While factions that work more formally, like the Blue Dog Coalition, are more likely to last longer as an organized unit. The similarity of both of these factions is that as voters shift, the shape and membership of the party changes, which contributes to the factions change.

## **VII. Conclusion**

Factions are reminders that tension exists within a party, based on ideology, geography, or issue based disputes, and can relate to any level of party involvement (activist, members, or voters). Both Congressional parties have their share of factions, which are shown in different ways - from voting blocs, to caucuses, to committee assignments, and even general terms used by congressional pundits. With the array of terms used here to represent factions, it shows truth in the fact that academic scholars cannot define a universal definition or understanding of factions, because factions are best understood as a group of citizens, united for a common passion.

Like Madison foresaw, factions are temporary, fleeting ones and throughout time, different factions come and go, holding onto power at different times. Contrary to Madison's feeling on the dangers of faction, factions can also work to better serve the party as a whole. Each faction play an important role in the party from offering a new idea, emphasizing an old, or bringing an unlikely group of people together. What is similar with both the current Congressional parties is that factions will continue to come and go, be good and negative for the party, and last an immeasurable amount time. The takeaway is factions keep our parties competitive.

Factions are a relatively understudied topic in American Political Science. Further research is needed to better understand the current state of American parties. Future research should focus on a way to measure factions, and continue to study the role each factional group has on the legislative process.

## CONCLUSION

### *Party Factions in Congress*

Upon drafting our Constitution, the founding fathers held a deep concern of factions and political parties in America. Despite these concerns, our early republic saw the establishment of a two-party system. While the Constitution does not mention political parties, they have held an important role in our political system.

American parties are not just broken down into two simple groups; each party is composed of numerous factional groups. Our founding fathers understood these groups to be factions. Since the formation of parties, academic scholars have continued to discuss the different roles factional groupings play within elections and more recently, scholars have discussed within the bounds of Congress.

The goal of this thesis is to discuss the current state of the parties in Congress, by focusing on the different factional groupings within the two parties. As numerous academic scholars have proven, there is no method to identify factions; therefore, this thesis looks to investigate the more popular party factions within the contemporary parties.

This dissertation began as an inquiry into the current state of the Republican Party in Congress. To do this, it shows how the Tea Party Movement emerged in American Politics, more practically, in the Republican Party. Chapter 1 found that the Tea Party Movement emerged into the Republican Party, with a strong populist message of anti-government and was used to capture the Republican Party's supporters by offering a voice to a party that was lacking a core message. It showed that the Tea Party movement

worked its way within the party by offering representatives an option to join the Tea Party Caucus.

Media, voters, and representatives were captivated by the Tea Party Movement, and the Tea Party Caucus served as a tool for House and Senate Republicans to relate to their constituents and use the Tea Party's message of fiscal conservatism before the 2010- midterm elections.

The chapter then goes on to investigate the rumored clash between the Tea Party and the Republican Party in Congress. It concludes that although the Tea Party regularly receives blame for the clash inside the Republican Establishment, the movement itself is not to blame, if anything, it has merely served as bold and appealing disguise over a conservative party that has slowly abandoned the principles of small government and fiscal responsibility.

Chapter 2 then moves to the current state of the Democratic Party. While there are no new movements, like the Tea Party movement, it found that the party had lost their conservative and moderate representatives. Unlike the Tea Party Movement, the Democrat's moderate faction is more organized within the institution of Congress, with long-standing caucuses known as the Blue Dogs and the New Democrats. While both groups like to call themselves, the moderate Democrats, they do not always see eye to eye. In addition, just like the fate of the Tea Party Movement, the Moderates and the Democrats faced their share of party infighting and concerns.

The first two chapters served to analyze each Congressional party separately. However, studying the growth of the Tea Party in Chapter 1, and the decline of the Moderate Democrats in Chapter 2, showed that during one party's defeat, the other



party's dominate faction triumphed. The take away from these two chapters, is as one faction reacts in one party, another party's faction is reacting. The second is the understanding that political parties in Congress represent the different factions within their party. However, the term faction leads to some type of confusion, and the first two chapters is missing, is an overall understanding on the notion of party factions.

Chapter 3 brings together the first two chapters by providing an in depth look at party factions. This chapters serves to understand the rise and decline of party factions, and in order to do this, it compares the Tea Party Movement to the Moderate Democrats. However, by reviewing the academic literature on party factions it finds some areas of concern. Academic scholars have offered very little theories regarding party factions in American political science. With no universal definition of factions or method to identify factions, there is no way to compare and contrast the Tea Party Movement to the Moderate Democrats. Therefore, this Chapter relies on the definition of factions through Madison that factions are groups of citizens that represent either the majority or minority of a whole, united under a shared passion.

This chapter investigates the current academic literature on party factions, and offers some insight on what factions are, how we can identify factions, and what role factions play in the contemporary Congress. Chapters 3 shows, that these different voices within the party represent party factions. Each faction recruits, organize, and work with the parties in their own unique way. It finds that perhaps our fore fathers understood factions best, that factions are designed to be temporary and always fleeting.

While this study is in no way perfect, there is quite a bit of limitations. This paper found factions are outside interest, and the lack of an acceptable definition limited the

study, in particular having a method to compare and contrast the two groups. The study was also difficult because it is hard to predict the future of the Tea Party Movement and Moderate Democrats. It found that offering a contemplative look at the current parties gave the researcher no opportunity for opinions or theories to debunk. The studies are typically covered by political pundits, but not in an academic setting.

As this thesis gave, a contemporary look at party faction, it also gives many areas for future study. Perhaps looking into the role factions play outside of Congress would offer a better way to evaluate the role faction play in parties or within Congress. One could also focus on the outside organization and role money play within that faction. A third approach would be to study older factional groupings to that of our modern factions, this could give researchers a better understanding of the different roles factions can play. Finally, scholars could look in the role of government and the rise of partisanship and find how factions jeopardize or even help out legislature find common group. There is reason to believe, that when an outside group is strong, parties form bipartisan coalitions in order to legislate.

As the role of factions in Congress are a relatively understudied topic in American Political Science, the study of party factions can provide better understandings of our party systems, from their formation, to organization, to the future needs of these groups.

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## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

### **PERSONAL DATA:**

Nicole Golonka Reppert

Born: December 7, 1985 in West Palm Beach, FL

### **EDUCATION:**

Johns Hopkins University, 2015

- Master of Art in Government

Washington, D.C.

Florida State University, 2008

- Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

Tallahassee, FL